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ABSTRACT

One of seven instructional units on Special Olympics Sports Skills Instructional Programs, this guide presents suggestions for coaching softball for mentally retarded persons. An overview section provides information on teaching suggestions, followed by a list of program goals, objectives, and benefits. Sports skill assessments measure athletes' present levels of functionings within the skills needed for two levels of softball (throwing, catching, batting, baserunning). Additional sections deal with modifications and adaptations, teaching skills, skill sequences, task analyses, and sportsmanship. Charts relating the sport skills to general academic areas and for measuring athletic skills are also included. (CL)

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SPECIAL OLYMPICS

SOFTBALL

Sports Skills
Instructional Program

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FOREWORD

In the Special Olympics program, coaches play a unique and indispensable role. It is they who impart to Special Olympians the sports skill and competitive spirit that define the true athlete.

But, they are far more than teachers. They are role models in the building of character; they assist in the development of the whole person. They give Special Olympians the most immediate awareness of their own worth, their ability, their courage, their capacity to grow and improve.

To be a coach in Special Olympics demands qualities of mind and spirit that transcend knowledge of specific games or events. But the foundation of good coaching is still competence and solid grounding in the fundamentals. Therefore, I cannot emphasize enough that sound training of coaches and athletes alike is the basis for everything we do in Special Olympics.

This Special Olympics Sports Skills Instructional Program was developed and tested by coaches, teachers and parents—it is written and illustrated so that coaches at every level of experience can improve their skills in working with Special Olympians.

Followed carefully and consistently, the Sports Skill Instructional Program will raise the level of all Special Olympics coaches and give to Special Olympians and their families the gift of pride and accomplishment that comes with doing something well.

Eunice Kennedy Shriver

Eunice Kennedy Shriver

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Photo: Ken Regan

INTRODUCTION TO PROGRAM

The Sports Skills Instructional Program is designed for mentally retarded persons who may exhibit any number of associated learning impairments. The program can be administered by the regular physical education teacher, the adaptive physical education specialist, the special education teacher, the recreation leader or the therapeutic recreation specialist. In addition, the Special Olympics coach, parent and volunteer will find the Sports Skills Instructional Program extremely helpful in preparing Special Olympians for competition. The Sports Skills Instructional Program is based on the premise that people entering the program have mastered the primary (motor) and perceptual motor skills. They must also possess a sufficient level of fitness to enable them to acquire the skills and knowledge necessary for learning a particular sport skill.

In November of 1975 a legislative landmark, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (Public Law 94-142), was signed into law. The law guarantees all children the right to free appropriate public education. As defined in section 121.24 of the law, the term "special education" means specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parent, to meet the unique needs of a handicapped child, including classroom instruction, *instruction in physical education*, home instruction, and instruction in hospitals and institutions. The importance of physical education in the total education of a handicapped child is evident in that physical education is the only subject area specifically addressed in the definition of special education. The Sports Skills Instructional Program has been designed to meet and comply with the requirements of Public Law 94-142.

The Instructional Program utilizes goals, short term objectives, task analyzed activities, assessments and teaching suggestions for individualizing and integrating sports skills instructions into other subject areas of the student's curriculum. Each sport has been task analyzed by physical educators and recreation specialists who have had success in teaching that particular sport to mentally retarded individuals.

Field Testing

During 1979-1981, the Sports Skills Instructional Program was field-tested among public and private schools, residential centers, activity centers and recreational agencies. Over 100 teachers and 2000 students were utilized in the test effort in the states of Arizona, California, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina and Wisconsin. Support for the program was justified by positive reactions and feedback from recreation, physical and special education professionals throughout the country. Collection and analysis of field test data revealed that the Sports Skills Instructional Program provided a systematic instructional process resulting in the development and improvement of sports skills among mentally retarded individuals.

Each sports skill unit complies with the requirements and regulations of Public Law 94-142 and can be written into the student's individualized education program.

Format of Special Olympics Sports Skills Instructional Program

The format of each Special Olympics sports skills instructional unit is:

- **Overview**—definition of activity, instruction/rules, equipment/supplies, relevance/appropriateness to athlete, ease of adaptation, and prerequisite skills.
- **Long Term Goal**—a statement of expected athlete behavior after the learning experience.
- **Short Term Objectives**—statements of specific athlete behaviors relative to the goal statement. Generally, the criteria for acceptable performance has been purposely omitted from the behavioral objective. In order to individualize teaching, the teacher of the sports skill unit should realistically determine the criteria based on the:
  (1) present ability of the athlete.
  (2) potential ability of the athlete.
  (3) behavioral limitations of the athlete.
  (4) behavioral limitations of the environment.
- **Modifications and Adaptations**—equipment, sport rules, and playing area to ensure successful participation by the athlete.
- **Sports Skill Assessment**—criterion referenced test to determine the athlete's present level of functioning within a specific sport or skill. Pre-tests and post-tests related to teaching skill, skill sequence and tasks.
- **Teaching Skill**—identifies the skill to be learned.
- **Skill Sequence**—sequenced behavior in which the learner must engage in order to demonstrate acquisition of the skill or knowledge described in the objective. Again, the teacher/recreator should determine the criteria for acceptable performance.
- **Task Analysis**—further analysis of skill into detailed steps which the athlete must master in order to demonstrate proficiency in that skill.
- **Teaching Suggestions**—suggestions of methods and materials to foster successful mastery of the skill by the athlete.
- **Infusion Chart**—sports skill in relation to general academic areas such as social studies, reading/language, home economics, arts, physical education, science, math, health, and industrial arts.
- **Athlete Skill Chart**—chart to mark the athlete's sports skill performance throughout the program.
- **Terminology and Resources**—glossary of terms, bibliography and resources (printed and audio-visual materials.)

ORGANIZATION OF TRAINING SESSION

Every Special Olympics program needs professional guidance and supervision, even though most of the training supervision can be and usually is handled by volunteers from many varied souces—teachers, parents, high school and college students, church organizations, civic groups, military organizations, etc. For example, volunteer coaches should be trained by professionals in physical education and sports.

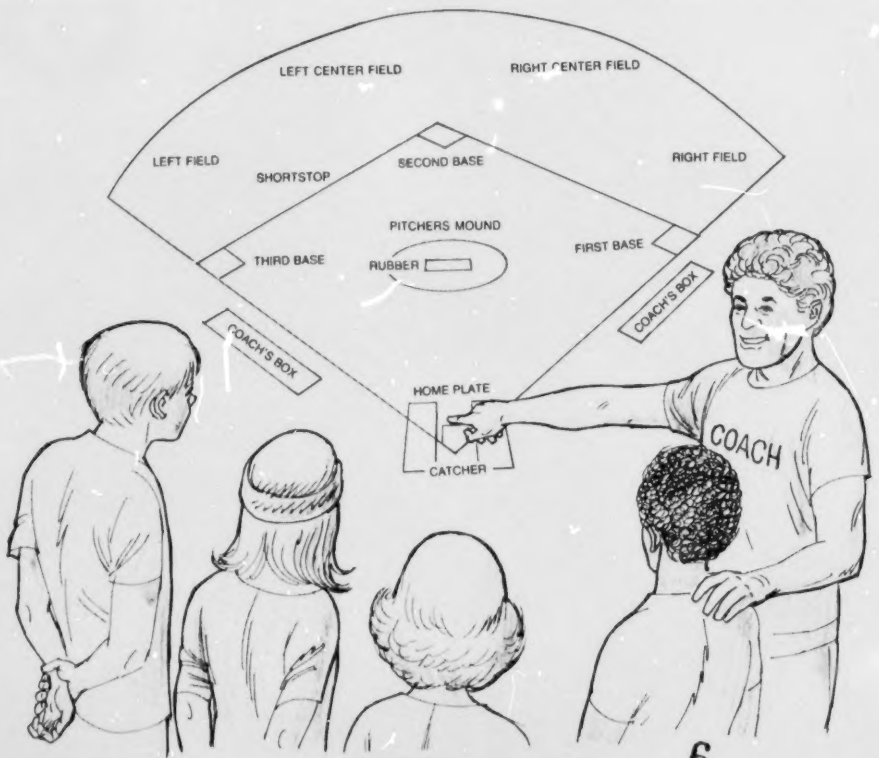
The method and manner by which you conduct your program will, in large part, determine your success as a teacher/coach. While teaching, approach your athletes enthusiastically and present the day's lesson in an enjoyable manner. Remember, Special Olympians return the excitement and enthusiasm transmitted to them by you. There are a variety of things you can do as a planner and instructor to create a positive, acceptable human environment to support learning in a group.

READY TO START

You've attended a Special Olympics Training School and you're ready to teach your athletes. Four athletes have received softball instruction in the past year and the remaining six athletes are new to your class. In order to determine the softball ability among your athletes, administer the Sports Skills Assessment—Level I. The assessment enables you, as the instructor, to assess the ability range of your class. High ability level athletes should be evaluated using the Sports Skills Assessment —Level II.

Once the assessment has been administered, individualize each practice so every athlete works on the skill area in which he/she needs the most improvement. If a Special Olympian shows problems doing a skill, review the basic steps in performing a skill as outlined in this guide. On the other hand, if an athlete scores well on the skill section, provide instruction in advanced skill techniques or have the athlete practice a skill that he/she is not as proficient in performing. An alternative for a Special Olympian who excels in various sports skills is to use him/her as a coach.

Plan 5–10 minutes at the beginning of each class to warm up properly. Athletes should stretch and perform agility exercises as part of their warm-up. Each class should offer 25–30 minutes of sports skills instruction. Mark each athlete's progress on the Skill Sheet. Always come to the class prepared. Know what you are going to do and how you are going to do it. Allow for possible modifications or adaptations to the original plan as needed. Finish each class with a fun group or game activity. At the end of the unit, review the Skill Sheets to determine your athlete's improvement. End the class on a positive note by praising the good things you have seen and giving a group cheer.



HINTS TO BE A GOOD TEACHER

- RELAX. Attempt to learn the rhythm and style of your class the first day.
- Be flexible. Alter instruction to meet the need of a particular athlete or group.
- Set realistic goals for each athlete.
- Don't expect immediate results as far as skill learning—patience, patience and more patience.
- Always plan and understand lesson thoroughly.
- Stand and face athletes during instruction.
- Participate in activity with athletes. Stay active.
- Teach by indirection as well as direction; athletes are great imitators.
- Allow the athlete plenty of time to become familiar with the skill before teaching another skill.
- Be firm and maintain good discipline.
- Be quick to praise.
- Provide brief and clear instructions.
- Always point out the positive before correcting: "Janet, you did well to get into the batting stance and you would have accomplished the skill if . . ."
- Use confidence builders. Always attempt to prevent an athlete from encountering repeated failures.

HINTS FOR ORGANIZING A GOOD CLASS

- Use the training area to your best advantage.
- Organize stations by ability. Color code ability groups (i.e., Green—Beginner; Blue—Rookie, etc.) No one should be standing around while you arrange things. Keep everyone busy.
- Keep athletes informed of changes in schedule or activities.
- Introduce athletes to one another and orient them to the instructional setting.
- Demonstrate the sport skill whenever and as frequently as possible.
- Keep the fun in fundamentals. Use a game approach.
- Devote a part of each class period to group activity.
- If activity is going well, it is often useful to stop activity while interest is high.

SPORTS SKILLS INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM FOR MULTI-HANDICAPPED INDIVIDUALS AND OLDER SPECIAL OLYMPICS

The Special Olympics Sports Skills Instructional Program applies to all Special Olympics participants including those who are multi-handicapped. Special Olympics has an objective of offering meaningful opportunities and competition to multi-handicapped individuals, regardless of the severity of their handicaps. Various adaptations and modifications of the Special Olympics Sports Skills Instructional Program should be made based upon the needs of the participants. See modifications/adaptations section of this guide.

The Sports Skills Instructional Program can also be helpful to improving the quality of life for adult participants. Regular exercise that includes a progressive program of activities—walking, jogging and sports activities—can improve cardiovascular fitness and maintain a healthy body and vigorous mind. It is important to recognize that many older participants may have been leading relatively sedentary lives; hence, training should progress slowly enough so as to avoid injuring the individual in the early stages. Special efforts should be made to enhance motivation and ensure that training is an enjoyable experience. The overall aims of training should be to improve fitness and encourage an enjoyable and beneficial use of leisure time.

SOFTBALL

This Softball unit can best be utilized to teach softball skills, improve general body and eye-hand coordination and increase the athlete's general level of fitness. The sports skills needed to participate in a game of slo-pitch softball are batting, throwing, running and catching. In this respect, instruction will be offered in batting, throwing, pitching, base running, catching and fielding, as well as game rules, scoring, strategy and sportsmanship.

Softball is a popular team sport for people of all ages. The game is played on a field composed of four bases, forming a diamond. A softball, bat, gloves, catcher's protective gear and bases are necessary equipment. A game is played by two teams of up to eleven players including the Designated Hitters. The game is divided into innings and each team is allowed one bat per inning and allowed three outs during its turn at bat in any one inning. The team with the greatest number of runs at the end of seven innings is the winner.

Softball is an excellent team activity. It involves a wide range of skills, exercise and coordination, inspires teamwork, and helps develop a sense of sportsmanship which can bring many hours of fun and enjoyment to people of all ages and, with modifications, to people with all handicaps.

GOAL/OBJECTIVES/BENEFITS

1

LONG TERM GOAL

The athlete will acquire basic skills, appropriate social behavior and a working knowledge of the rules to enable him/her to successfully participate in a regulation or modified game of Slo-pitch Softball.

2

SHORT TERM OBJECTIVES

1.0 Given demonstration and practice, the athlete will warm-up properly before participating in Slo-pitch Softball.
2.0 Given demonstration and practice, the athlete will successfully perform Level I Softball Skills.
3.0 Given demonstration and practice, the athlete will successfully perform Level II Softball Skills.
4.0 Given standard or modified rules and regulations, the athlete will adhere to those rules and regulations while participating in Slo-pitch Softball.
5.0 While participating in Slo-pitch Softball, the athlete will exhibit sportsmanship with teammates and opponents at all times.

3

BENEFITS

- Softball develops eye-hand coordination, agility, speed and body control.
- Softball improves total fitness.
- Softball teaches teamwork.
- Softball provides action.
- Softball provides social outlets.
- Softball increases athlete's options for leisure time activities.

CLOTHING

CLOTHING

Clothing must be suitable for the activities involved. In general, this means comfortable, non-confining clothing and well-fitted shoes that are appropriate for the activities being performed. Proper fitting and clean uniforms tend to give athletes a boost. Although the saying "You play as well as you look" has never been proven, many athletes and coaches continue to believe it.

Shorts

Coaching Shorts with waistbands that fit snugly around the waist are recommended. Shorts should be long enough to provide protection of the thighs when sliding. Shorts should provide the athlete with comfort and good appearance. An elastic waistband will help keep the shirt in place. Loose shorts cause athletes discomfort, breaking their concentration.

Pants

Baseball pants or long pants are recommended for playing softball. Long pants should be sturdy, but not too heavy. Blue jeans are a good example. Pants should be comfortable and non-confining.

Socks

Tube socks will last an entire season, giving support and a good appearance. Loose or stretched socks look sloppy and provide no calf support.

Shoes

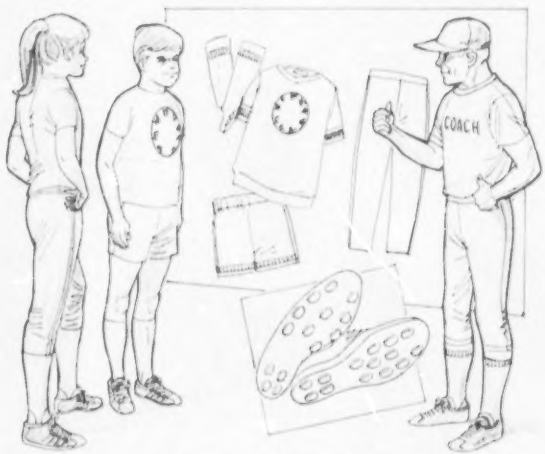
Probably the most important piece of clothing a player wears is a pair of shoes. Shoes which are ill-fitted can cause the athlete discomfort that will impede the athlete's play and concentration. Molded runner softball cleats or sturdy sneakers are recommended. Metal cleats are not allowed. Cushioned insole, arch and heel support are important features of a good softball shoe.

Caps

A baseball cap is considered a required item of the standard baseball uniform, and should be worn at all times when playing softball. The cap should fit securely on the athlete's head, but should not be too tight.

Warm-Up Suits

Warm-up suits may be worn when playing softball in cold weather, or when warming up prior to practice or a game. Medium weight cotton sweatshirts and pants are excellent and inexpensive warm-ups.



TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Discuss the types of clothes to be worn when playing softball.**
- **Discuss the importance of wearing properly fitted clothing.**
- **Point out the advantages and disadvantages of various types of clothing.**
- **Show pictures of clothes which are appropriate for softball.**
- **Using a flannel board and felt, cut out articles of clothing and have the athlete properly dress a figure that represents a softball player.**
- **Take athletes to a softball or baseball game and point out the various parts of a uniform.**
- **Have athletes model their complete uniforms.**

FIELD PREPARATION

The playing area should be defined to discourage disorganized running about. This permits more time to spend on useful activities and less on disciplinary measures. The surrounding area should provide no physical hazards that might result in injury to an athlete or damage to the school or its equipment.

A level surface is needed to play softball. Softball can be played either on a field or in a gymnasium with modified rules. The field dimensions can be modified depending on the ability of the athletes, number of players and/or the available playing area. A dimensional diagram of an official softball field is included at the back of this guide.

A dirt infield and a backstop are recommended for playing softball outdoors. Bases with nylon covers should be secured by a spike at the proper locations. A solid rubber home plate and pitcher's plate should also be firmly in place. Plastic bases and softer balls are available for indoor play.

EQUIPMENT

Before playing softball, the playing area should always be cleared and in a safe condition for play. An uncluttered environment provides less distraction to the student while learning. Therefore, do not set up equipment until you are ready to use it. Also, trash and debris (e.g., leaves, twigs and loose obstacles) must be cleared from the entire playing area (foul territory and dugouts included) before play in order to eliminate the possibility of injury.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Discuss the official boundaries of a softball field with the athlete.**
- **Using a flannel board, have the athlete identify the boundaries.**
- **Take the athlete to a playing field and demonstrate how to establish the boundaries.**
- **Assist the athlete in marking off the field.**
- **Discuss and point out what objects are to be removed from the playing area.**
- **Have athlete prepare field by removing trash and debris.**
- **Have the athlete place and secure bases.**

EQUIPMENT

Equipment must be safe for athletic use. Use proper equipment at all times and teach athlete to use equipment and perform all activities the "right" way, first time and every time. For safety's sake, keep playing areas free of clutter, like loose equipment and clothing. Be alert to safety hazards and problem areas and do whatever is necessary to avoid them

Softballs

A 30 cm. rubber or leather covered softball with compressed cork center is recommended. Soft-softballs and 40 cm. balls are recommended for instructional use.

Bats

Aluminum and/or wood bats are used in softball. All bats must have "Official Softball" printed on them, and they must have taped or rubber covered handles (according to A.S.A. rules). Generally, the athlete should use a bat which suits his/her height and weight. A 16 oz./32 inch (.4 kg/81 cm) bat is recommended, and the bat should not measure more than 34 oz./34 inches (.9 kg/86 cm).

Gloves

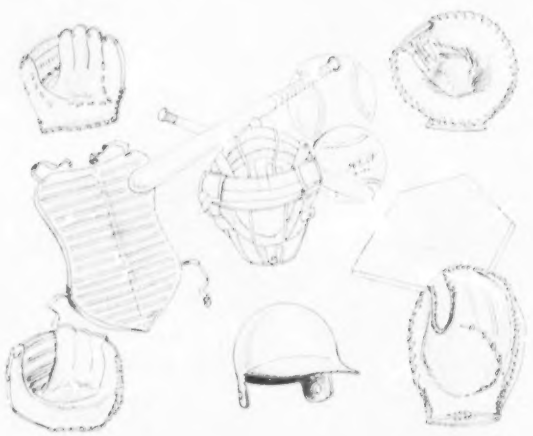
Gloves are made for both left-handed and right-handed players. They are also made in junior and standard sizes. All new gloves require a breaking in period. Neatsfoot oil helps condition and soften the leather.

Catcher's Equipment

A padded mask and chest protector are recommended for all catchers.

Helmets

Batting helmets must be worn at all times by players who are at bat or on base in order to protect them against an errant throw.



COACHING AIDS

Coaching aids are vital to the success of every softball program. Use cones, batting tees, and reversible jerseys during your training sessions. A tethered softball is excellent for developing batting skills. It allows the athlete to practice hitting without the need to chase the ball. The tethered softball is also adaptable to wheelchair activities.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Show the athlete the equipment used in softball.**
- **Name each piece of equipment as you show it and give the use for each piece of equipment.**
- **Display the equipment used in softball and have the athlete name each piece.**
- **Display a variety of sports equipment and have the athlete select the equipment used for softball.**
- **Discuss the importance of taking care of all sports equipment.**

STRETCHING EXERCISES

1.0 Given demonstration and practice, the athlete will warm up properly before participating in Slo-pitch Softball.

A. STRETCHING EXERCISES

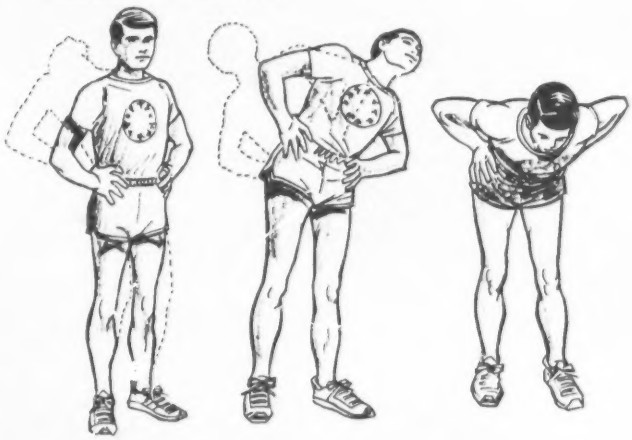
1. Perform a trunk rotation exercise.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Stand with feet shoulder-width apart, hands on hips.
b. Slowly bend trunk as far left as possible.
c. In a circular motion, bend to the front, to the right side and to the back.
d. Repeat several times.
e. Perform task in opposite direction.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Demonstrate the exercise and provide physical assistance if necessary.**



2. Perform a toe touch exercise.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Stand with feet slightly apart and flat on the ground.
b. Keep the legs as straight as possible.
c. Bend from the waist and reach as far down as possible.
d. Try to touch toes or, is possible, the floor.
e. Hold stretch for 5 seconds.

3. Perform an arm stretch.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Stand in a relaxed position.
b. Extend arms out to the sides.
c. Point fingers straight out and reach as far to the side as possible. Hold for five seconds.
d. Raise arms overhead.
e. Reach as far up as possible. Hold for five seconds.
f. Lower arms to full extension in front of body. Hold for five seconds.
g. Swing arms apart and around to the back as far as possible. Hold for five seconds.
h. Relax arms to the sides.
i. Repeat several times.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Emphasize holding the stretch in all exercises. Do not bounce to try to reach toes.**

4. Perform a calves stretch.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Assume a sitting position on the ground, with legs extended together and toes pointed up.
b. Bend forward at the waist.
c. Keeping knees on the ground, extend arms forward and try to touch the toes.
d. Flex ankles toward hands to tighten calf muscles.
e. When calves tighten, hold the stretched position for five seconds.
f. Return to relaxed sitting position.
g. Repeat 10 times, gradually increasing distance of arm reach.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Ask athlete to not let knees bend during stretch.**
- **Instruct the athlete to stretch only as far as is relatively comfortable. Increase the length of the stretch gradually.**

B. COORDINATION EXERCISES

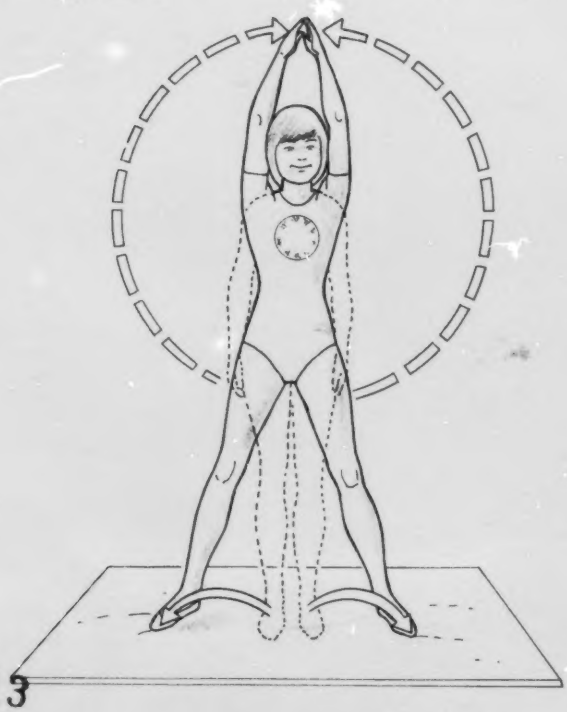
1. Perform jumping jacks.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Stand with legs together and arms at the sides.
b. Jump up and spread legs slightly more than shoulder-width apart.
c. At same time, raise extended arms to the side and fully overhead.
d. Jump up and bring legs back together. At same time, bring arms back down to the sides.
e. Repeat 10 times.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Perform this exercise smoothly, but not too rapidly.**
- **Instruct the athlete to stay on his/her toes during exercise.**



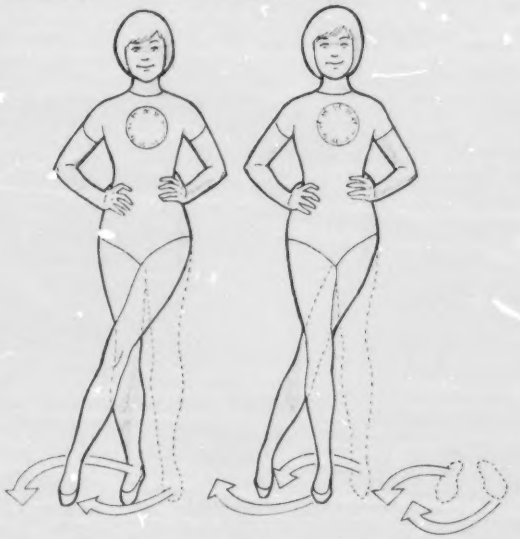
2. Perform a stepover exercise.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Stand in a relaxed position.
b. At coach's signal, step sideways by crossing right foot in front of the left.
c. Uncross legs by stepping to the left with left leg.
d. Step again to the left, this time with right foot crossing behind the left.
e. Uncross legs.
f. Repeat several times.
g. Perform exercise moving to the right.
h. Keep head up, shoulders square and arms out for balance.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

• Instruct the athlete to stay on his/her toes during this exercise.
• Advise the athlete to concentrate on lifting the knees to keep feet from getting tangled.



C. STRENGTHENING EXERCISES

1. Perform sit-up exercises.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Lie on floor with knees bent.
b. Clasp hands behind head.
c. Come up to a sitting position.
d. Touch right elbow to left knee.
e. Return to lying position and repeat on opposite side.
f. Repeat exercise 5 times; gradually increase to 10 times or more.

TEACHING SUGGESTION

• Have partner hold feet or place feet under a chair for support.

2. Perform push-ups.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. With body inclined forward, place weight on hands and feet.
b. Bend arms to bring chest to floor then push up to original position. Do not bend hips.
c. Repeat exercise 5 times and gradually increase to 10 repetitions.

TEACHING SUGGESTION

• Start from kneeling position. Kneel with body inclined forward, placing weight on hands and knees. Bend arms to bring chest to floor then push up to original position. Do not bend hips.

D. THROWING WARM-UP

1. Perform a throwing warm-up before each practice or game.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Pair off with a fellow athlete.
b. Stand 10 meters apart.
c. Throw the ball to partner.
d. Gradually increase the distance.

2. Warm-up on the field.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Assume proper position.
b. Field balls hit to area of responsibility.
c. Throw to designated teammate.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Advise the athletes to throw lightly at the start of a warm-up, and to increase velocity gradually. Tell the athletes not to throw as hard as possible during the warm-up. Rather, the athlete should be practicing accuracy while loosening the throwing muscles.**
- **Make the athletes pair off and throw ground balls and fly balls to each other. This is good for catching skills and helps loosen the throwing arm.**
- **Suggest to the athletes that they should throw a softball every day to practice and to keep the arm muscles loose. Remind the athletes to keep their practice throws at short and middle distances. Long throws tend to tear arm muscles.**

SPORTS SKILLS ASSESSMENT—LEVEL I

INSTRUCTIONS

The Sports Skills Assessment is designed to determine the athlete's level of ability within a specific skill or sport before he/she begins training, and to determine the athlete's progress at various stages of the program.

In administering the test, observe the athlete as he/she performs each test item. Score the athlete accordingly by checking the box located to the left of each task performed successfully. If there is any question as to the athlete's competence in a particular skill, require the athlete to perform the task 3 out of 5 times.

After scoring the athlete, total the checked boxes and indicate the athlete's present level of ability (i.e., Beginner, Rookie, Winner). If the athlete is performing at a higher skill level than measured in the Skills Assessment-Level I (i.e., scores at least 30 items), re-evaluate the athlete using Skills Assessment—Level II.

Skills Assessment—Level I

Pre Score / Post Score

Test Item #1 **THROWING**

- ☐ ☐ Attempts to throw the softball.
- ☐ ☐ Throws the softball in any direction.
- ☐ ☐ Throws the softball in desired direction.
- ☐ ☐ Throws the softball to a designated teammate.
- ☐ ☐ Fields the ball and throws to appropriate teammate.
- ☐ ☐ Throws the softball underhand into a target.
- ☐ ☐ Throws the softball overhand into a target.
- ☐ ☐ Throws the softball to designated spots, 10, 20 and 30 meters away.

Test Item #2 **CATCHING**

- ☐ ☐ Attempts to catch a softball.
- ☐ ☐ Attempts to field a softball.
- ☐ ☐ Fields a rolled ball correctly.
- ☐ ☐ Makes a below-the-waist catch.
- ☐ ☐ Makes an above-the-waist catch.
- ☐ ☐ Catches an underhand throw.
- ☐ ☐ Catches an overhand throw.

Test Item #3 **BATTING**

- ☐ ☐ Attempts to hit a ball.
- ☐ ☐ Assumes proper batting stance.
- ☐ ☐ Hits ball off batting tee in any direction
- ☐ ☐ Hits ball off batting tee in desired direction.
- ☐ ☐ Hits ball off batting tee into fair territory in a softball game.

Pre Score / Post Score

Test Item #4 **BASE RUNNING**

- ☐ ☐ Attempts to run to first base.
- ☐ ☐ Walks to first base.
- ☐ ☐ Identifies order of running bases.
- ☐ ☐ Runs to first base.
- ☐ ☐ Runs within the base path.
- ☐ ☐ Tags first base and runs beyond it.

Test Item #5 **RULES OF SOFTBALL**

- ☐ ☐ Shows understanding of softball.
- ☐ ☐ Understands what constitutes an out.
- ☐ ☐ Understands what constitutes an inning.
- ☐ ☐ Understands basic rules of softball (foul play, force out, safe play, hit, strike, batter's box, etc.)
- ☐ ☐ Understands and recognizes playing area and boundaries.
- ☐ ☐ Helps teammates with the rules while playing or practicing softball.
- ☐ ☐ Correctly answers one half of Softball Rules Quiz.

Test Item #6 **SOFTBALL PARTICIPATION**

- ☐ ☐ Attempts to participate in softball.
- ☐ ☐ Participates a little, recognizes teammates and opponents.
- ☐ ☐ Practices softball skills.
- ☐ ☐ Adapts ability to throw, catch, field, run and bat.
- ☐ ☐ Participates cooperatively and competitively.
- ☐ ☐ Participates enthusiastically.

_____ **PRE SCORE**	☐ 1-13 BEGINNER ☐ 14-26 ROOKIE ☐ 27-39 WINNER

_____ **POST SCORE**	☐ 1-13 BEGINNER ☐ 14-26 ROOKIE ☐ 27-39 WINNER

_____ hrs.
APPROXIMATE TRAINING TIME

2.0 Given demonstration and practice, the athlete will successfully perform Level I Softball Skills.

A. THROWING

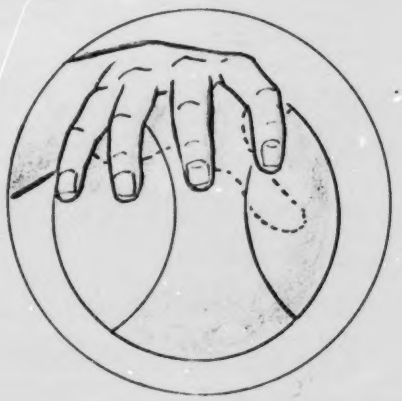
1. **Demonstrate the correct grip.**

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Select a softball.
b. Hold the ball with the first and second fingers spread on top, thumb under the ball and the third and fourth fingers on the side.
c. Squeeze the ball lightly with fingertips.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Variation: Athletes with small hands may place all four fingers on top of the ball, thumb to one side and hold the ball in the palm of the hand.**
- **Touch the athlete's fingertips with your hands. Place the athlete's fingers in the correct position.**



2. Throw the ball underhand.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Position feet together pointing at target.
b. Bring the throwing hand and arm back in a pendulum swing with the palm facing forward.
c. Bend the elbow slightly.
d. Place weight on foot on throwing side.
e. At top of backswing, take a step forward with foot opposite throwing hand.
f. Swing arm forward, releasing ball when fingers are pointing at target.
g. Allow back foot to step up parallel to forward foot, a bit more than shoulder-width apart.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Demonstrate the proper technique for throwing.**
- **Physically guide the athlete through throwing.**
- **Place footprints on the floor and have the athlete follow the pattern for throwing.**
- **Have athlete practice throwing the ball making any necessary corrections in throwing force.**
- **Throw the ball at target one-half meter away.**
- **Increase the throwing distance at target, increasing distance in increments of 1.5 meters until student can accurately hit a target 18 meters away.**
- **Point out the advantage to finishing the underhand throw in a "ready-to field" position.**

3. Demonstrate the proper overhand throwing technique.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Grip the ball correctly.
b. Stand relaxed, facing the target.
c. Rotate hips and pivot on left foot, turning the body to the right. Left shoulder now faces the target.
d. Bring right arm back so the ball is held behind the right ear.
e. Bend left elbow and point it out in front of body.
f. Start the throwing motion by pushing down hard with the right foot.
g. Step toward target with left foot.
h. Keep the right hip back and low and the right arm bent with the ball behind the ear.
i. Push off the right leg and rotate the hips, shifting the weight to the left foot.
j. Keep the upper body in line with the direction of throw and the eyes focused on the target.
k. Whip the left arm to the rear, increasing the rotation of the upper body and hips.
l. Leading with the right elbow, extend the right arm fully forward, completing the throw by snapping the wrist and releasing the ball at a 45 degree angle.
m. Follow through by bringing the hand completely down and across the body.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Stand beside the athlete. Place softball in the athlete's hand and move his/her arm through a throwing motion.**
- **Emphasize form. Stress one aspect of form at a time, work on it for a few minutes or for a certain number of throws and then move on to another aspect of form. Include a sufficient number of form throws at increasing distances in preparation for all-out throws in practice or competition.**
- **Practice throwing over objects placed at different distances from the restraining line to get proper release angle and throwing arc. Use football goal posts, improvised targets made from bamboo poles, wooden dowels, broomsticks, and string, or adapt other devices to practice releasing the ball at a 45 degree angle.**

B. CATCHING

1. Assume the correct position for catching the ball below the waist.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Stand in a relaxed position.
b. Hold hands in front of body with arms slightly extended at waist height.
c. Place little fingers together, palms up, thumbs out.
d. Cup the palms to form a pocket for catching a ball.
e. Repeat sequence until athlete correctly positions his/her hands in this manner.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Demonstrate the proper position of hands.**
- **Point out the similarity between the below-the-waist catch position in softball and trying to hold water in one's hands.**

2. Assume the correct position for catching the ball above the waist.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Stand in a relaxed position.
b. Hold hands in front of body, at chin height.
c. Be able to peer over the top of the hands.
d. Place thumbs together, palms facing forward, fingers pointing up.
e. Flex wrists back slightly to make palms face slightly skyward.
f. Cup hands to form a pocket for catching a ball.
g. Repeat sequence until athlete correctly positions his/her hands in this manner.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Demonstrate the proper position of hands.**
- **Have the athlete switch catching positions: from the below the waist position to the above the waist position, and so forth.**

3. Catch a thrown ball below the waist.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Stand in a relaxed position facing thrower, with softball glove.
b. Assume correct "below-the-waist" catch position.
c. Track the ball as it leaves the thrower's hand.
d. Place hands in line with flight of ball.
e. Watch the ball all the way into the hands.
f. Catch the ball in the pocket of the glove and smother the ball with the bare hand.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Explain the technique of catching with a glove (e.g. using barehand to hold onto ball).**
- **Practice getting the hands under the ball to catch it.**
- **Reduce the size of the ball as the athlete's skill improves.**
- **As skill improves, gradually increase the distance of the throw.**
- **Demonstrate how to drop a ball (a bouncy ball) and catch it after it rebounds back into the air.**
- **Have the athlete practice throwing the ball straight up and catching it before it hits the ground.**

CATCHING—LEVEL I

4. Catch a thrown ball above the waist.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Stand in relaxed position facing thrower, with softball glove.
b. Assume correct "above-the-waist" catch position.
c. Track the ball as it leaves the thrower's hand.
d. Place hands in line with flight of ball. The athlete must be able to see under, through, or above hands as ball approaches.
e. Watch the ball all the way into the hands.
f. Catch the ball in the pocket of the glove. Smother the ball with the bare hand.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Explain the technique of catching with a glove (e.g. using bare hand to hold ball; looking through the webbing; etc.)**
- **Practice positioning the athlete's entire body under the catch.**
- **Emphasize the importance of catching the ball with the hands, not with the body.**
- **Demonstrate the many heights at which this type of catch can be made (e.g. in a crouch, leaping, running, etc.)**
- **Practice all of the catching skills with a tennis ball before progressing to a regulation softball. The tennis ball serves three purposes; it bounces, it doesn't hurt bare hands, and it is highly visible.**

C. BATTING

1. Demonstrate the proper batting stance.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Grip the bat about 5 to 8 cm. from the knob. Wrap fingers and thumbs around the handle.
b. Right-handed batter grips the bat with right hand above the left, with hands touching.
c. Left-handed batter grips the bat with left hand above the right.
d. From the field, a right-handed batter stands to the right side of the plate, the left-handed batter on the left side.
e. Stand in batter's box with feet pointing at the plate and a comfortable distance apart.
f. Bend knees slightly.
g. Keep back straight. Hips and shoulders face the plate.
h. Hold bat upright and positioned at the back shoulder, 10–15 centimeters away from the body with the hands chest height.
i. Keep head up and look at the pitcher.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Demonstrate the proper batting stance. Once the athlete is familiar with the look of the proper stance, show him/her improper stances and ask him/her to point out the errors.**
- **Have the athlete assume a stance that is relaxed and comfortable for him/her. Not every stance is the same.**
- **Ask the athlete to practice the stance in front of a mirror.**

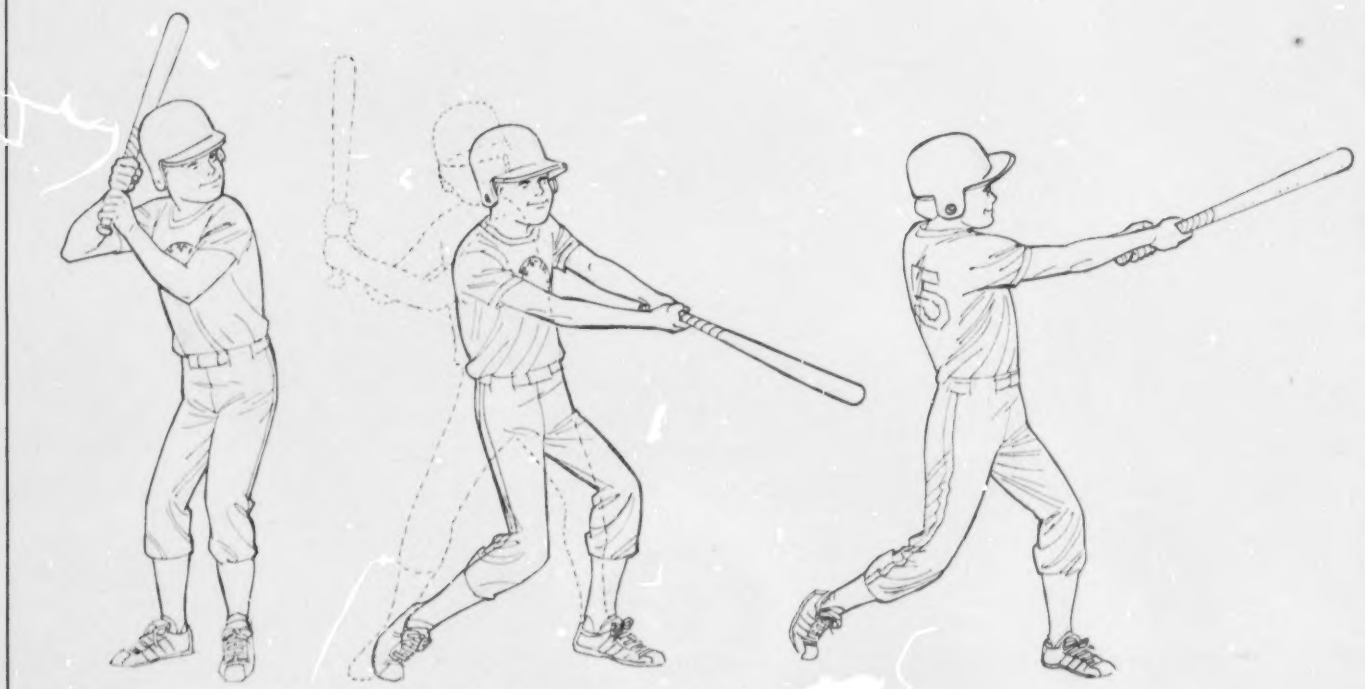
2. Demonstrate the proper batting swing.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Assume proper batting stance.
b. To begin swing, start with weight evenly placed on both feet.
c. Take a small step toward the pitcher with front foot.
d. Rotate hips and shoulders in same direction.
e. Lead the swing with the forward elbow.
f. As lead elbow passes the body, hands are leading the bat.
g. Head of the bat arcs down and around to a point where the bat is parallel to the ground, directly over the plate, pointing across the plate.
h. At this point, extend arms and snap wrists so that the top hand goes from palm up to palm down.
i. Finish the swing by rolling the hands and following through with the bat.
j. Focus eyes on point of contact.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Demonstrate the proper swing.**
- **Suggest the athlete use a count of four to keep a rhythm to the swing: one, step; two, lead with elbow; three, snap wrists and roll hands at point of contact; four, swing all the way through.**
- **Have athlete practice swing all the way through.**
- **Have athlete practice swing in front of mirror.**
- **Swing a weighted bat to strengthen arm, shoulder and torso muscles.**



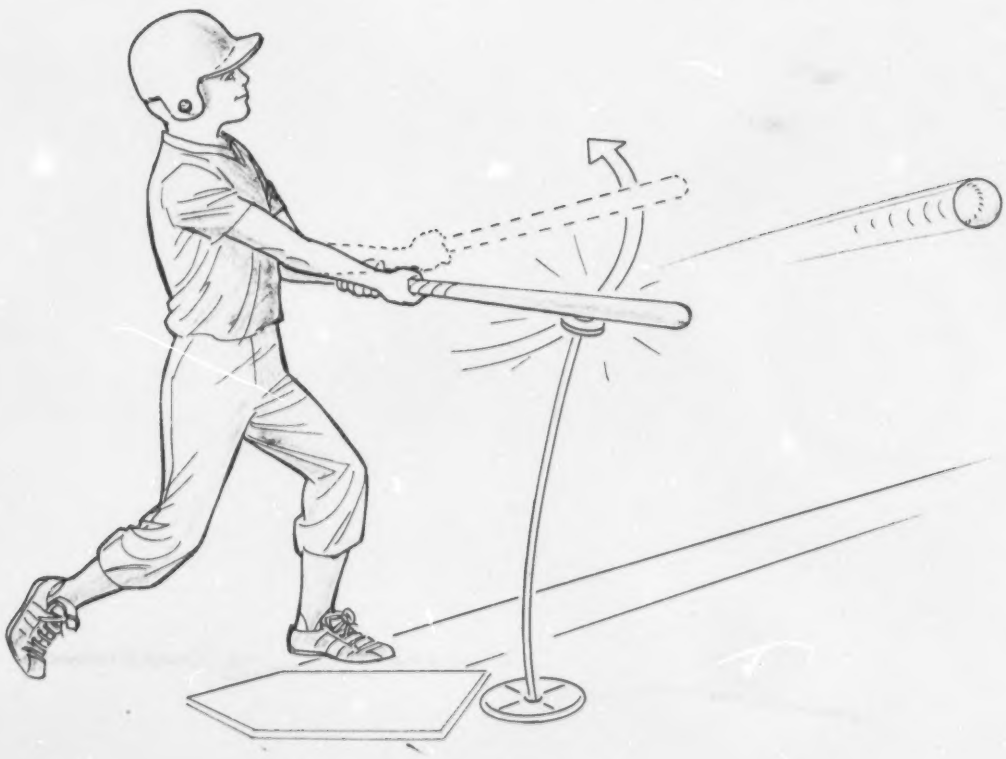
3. Hit a softball off a batting tee.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Assume proper batting stance.
b. Perform the proper batting swing.
c. Hit the ball from the tee into the playing area.
d. Keep eyes focused on point of contact.
e. Watch the bat strike the ball.
f. Bat is parallel to the ground at point of contact.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Start athlete with a bat which he/she can swing easily. Let the athlete swing at the tee which has no ball on it in order to figure out exactly where his/her swing should be.**
- **Ask athlete to hit the ball using a controlled swing. Emphasize watching the bat hit the ball.**
- **Gradually let the athlete progress to a bat size which will be always right for him/her.**
- **Point out the sweet spot on a bat: the fat part, opposite the side with the label.**
- **Instruct the athlete to drop the bat after hitting the ball.**
- **Discuss the possibilities for injury if the bat is thrown instead of dropped.**



BASE RUNNING—LEVEL I

D. BASE RUNNING

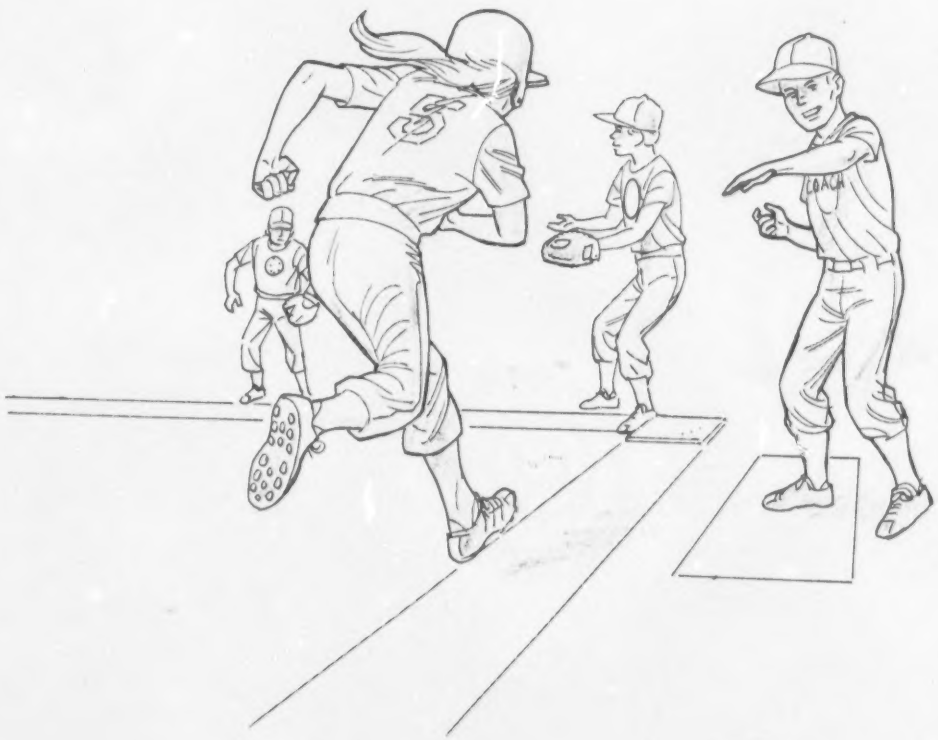
1. Properly run to first base.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Stand at home plate.
b. Assume proper batting stance, without a bat.
c. Perform proper swing without bat. Step through with back foot after the swing and start toward first base.
d. Run down first base path.
e. Run over first base, tagging the base.
f. Be sure to run beyond first base after tagging it.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Demonstrate running to first base.**
- **Hold athlete's hand and run with the athlete to first base.**
- **Have athlete run to first base as fast as possible.**
- **Practice running to the right of first base after tagging it, into foul territory.**
- **Explain the reason for running into foul territory after touching first base (i.e. to stay safe at first.)**
- **Practice rounding first base toward second base.**
- **Explain the reason for rounding first base (i.e. in case there is a chance to reach second base before the fielder can get the ball there).**
- **Discuss the importance of good base running.**
- **Walk athlete around bases in correct order, touching each base. Have athlete run around bases by himself/herself.**
- **Emphasize that a runner cannot run more than 1 meter from a direct line between bases to avoid being tagged out.**
- **Demonstrate the method of the wide approach to each base (on an extra base hit) in order to cut down the angle of the turn.**



2. Run around the bases.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Identify the bases.
b. Stand at home plate.
c. Assume proper batting stance, without a bat.
d. Perform proper swing without bat. Step through with back foot after the swing and start toward first base.
e. Run to first base and tag the base with right foot without breaking stride.
f. Continue running to second and third base, respectively, making sure each base is touched in proper order.
g. Run to and tag home plate.

SPORTS SKILLS ASSESSMENT—LEVEL II

INSTRUCTIONS

The Sports Skills Assessment—Level II is designed for higher skill level athletes. Coaches should use this test to determine the athlete's ability in Softball once he/she has shown competency in the Sports Skills Assessment—Level I.

In administering the test, observe the athlete as he/she performs each test item. Score the athlete accordingly by checking the box located to the left of each task performed successfully. If there is any question as to the athlete's competence in a particular skill, require the athlete to perform the task 3 out of 5 times.

By graduating from Level I, the athlete will have successfully performed at least 30 items on his/her Skills Assessment—Level I. After scoring the athlete on the Skills Assessment—Level II, total the checked boxes, add 30 and indicate the athlete's present level of ability (i.e., Champ, Superchamp, Superstar). If the athlete is performing a lower skill level than measured in the Skills Assessment—Level II, re-evaluate the athlete using Skills Assessment—Level I.

Skills Assessment—Level II

Pre Score / Post Score

Test Item #1 **PITCHING**

- ☐ ☐ Attempts to pitch a softball.
- ☐ ☐ Pitches a softball underhand for a distance of 6 meters feet into a target.
- ☐ ☐ Pitches a softball underhand for a distance of 12 meters feet into a target.
- ☐ ☐ Pitches a softball underhand for a distance of 12 meters into a 1 meter target.
- ☐ ☐ Pitches a softball underhand for a distance of 12 meters, over a 2 meter high string, into a 1 meter target.
- ☐ ☐ Pitches a softball outside of the strike zone.
- ☐ ☐ Pitches a softball in the strike zone.

Test Item #2 **CATCHING**

- ☐ ☐ Attempts to catch a softball.
- ☐ ☐ Catches a thrown ball
- ☐ ☐ Fields a hit ball.
- ☐ ☐ Catches a hit ball.
- ☐ ☐ Attempts to catch or field a hit ball in a softball game.
- ☐ ☐ Catches or fields a hit ball cleanly in a softball game.

Test Item #3 **BATTING**

- ☐ ☐ Attempts to hit a pitched ball.
- ☐ ☐ Hits a pitched ball.
- ☐ ☐ Hits a pitched ball into fair territory in a softball game.
- ☐ ☐ Hits a pitched ball for a base hit in a softball game.

Test Item #4 **BASE RUNNING**

- ☐ ☐ Attempts to run to first base after hitting a pitched ball.
- ☐ ☐ Runs safely to first base after hitting a pitched ball.
- ☐ ☐ Runs through first base to stay safe at the base.
- ☐ ☐ Rounds first base when there is a chance for an extra base.
- ☐ ☐ When appropriate, tags up and runs on a caught fly ball.
- ☐ ☐ Runs within the base path.
- ☐ ☐ Follows base coach's advice while on base.

Test Item #5 **KNOWLEDGE OF SOFTBALL**

- ☐ ☐ Understands rules and regulations of softball game.
- ☐ ☐ Understands softball terminology.
- ☐ ☐ Recognizes each position on a softball team.
- ☐ ☐ Recognizes umpire's signs during a softball game.
- ☐ ☐ Understands the importance of safety and sportsmanship while playing softball.
- ☐ ☐ Adapts to changes in game situations.
- ☐ ☐ Correctly answers 90% of Softball Rules Quiz.
- ☐ ☐ Helps coach score a softball game.

Test Item #6 **SOFTBALL PARTICIPATION**

- ☐ ☐ Participates in a slo-pitch softball game.
- ☐ ☐ Practices softball skills frequently.
- ☐ ☐ Practices softball skills with enthusiasm.
- ☐ ☐ Participates regularly on a softball team.
- ☐ ☐ Exhibits enthusiasm while playing in a softball game.
- ☐ ☐ Exhibits safety and fair play while playing softball.

_____ **PRE SCORE**	☐ 40-52 Champ ☐ 53-65 Superchamp ☐ 66-77 Superstar	_____ **POST SCORE**
☐ 40-52 Champ ☐ 53-65 Superchamp ☐ 66-77 Superstar		_____ hrs. **APPROXIMATE TRAINING TIME**

3.0. Given demonstration and practice, the athlete will successfully perform Level II Softball skills.

A. PITCHING

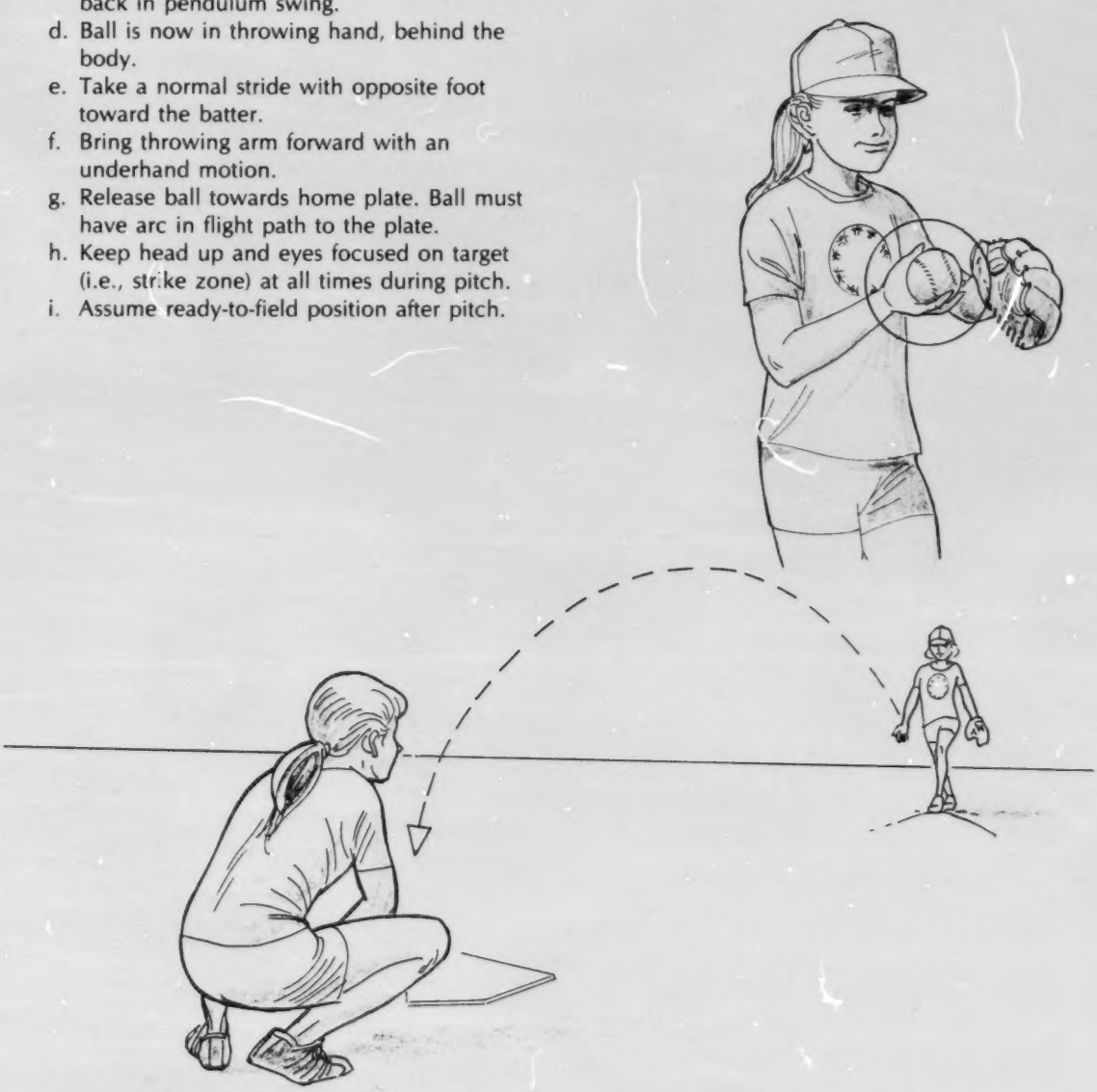
1. Pitch the softball underhand through the strike zone.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Stand with both feet on pitcher's rubber, facing home plate.
b. Hold ball in front of body with both hands.
c. Extend the throwing arm forward and bring it back in pendulum swing.
d. Ball is now in throwing hand, behind the body.
e. Take a normal stride with opposite foot toward the batter.
f. Bring throwing arm forward with an underhand motion.
g. Release ball towards home plate. Ball must have arc in flight path to the plate.
h. Keep head up and eyes focused on target (i.e., strike zone) at all times during pitch.
i. Assume ready-to-field position after pitch.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Demonstrate the correct motion. Emphasize controlled and smooth motion.**
- **Have the catcher make a target for the pitcher. Tell the pitcher not to aim, but to just throw the ball to the catcher.**
- **Practice pitching by throwing at a target taped to a wall. Gradually increase distance as well as arc of pitch.**



2. Understand and follow the pitching rules at all times.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. May take only one step forward during delivery.
b. Must pitch underhand.
c. Cannot fake a pitch.
d. Cannot roll or bounce pitch deliberately.
e. Must wait for batter to be ready before pitching.
f. Must keep contact foot on pitcher's rubber until the ball leaves the hand.
g. Pitch must have a minimum arc of one meter and a maximum arc of four meters.
h. Learn rules for pitcher substitution.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Explain to the athlete the reasons for the different pitching rules.**
- **Discuss the problems of not following those rules.**
- **Advise the pitcher to think of one thing, throwing the ball to the catcher's mitt.**

B. CATCHING

1. Assume the correct ready-to-field position.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Take an assigned spot on field.
b. Position legs shoulder-width apart.
c. Bend knees slightly.
d. Place hands on knees or in front of body.
e. Keep weight forward and even on both feet.
f. Keep head up, and eyes on batter and ball.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Demonstrate correct position.**
- **Point out the key body joints.**
- **Have athlete assume correct ready-to-field position from a relaxed standing one repeatedly.**

2. Field a hit ground ball.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Assume correct fielding position.
b. Watch ball as it makes contact with bat.
c. Move sideways to get body in line with the path of ball.
d. Keep glove open, palm up, and fingers on the ground.
e. Watch the ball into glove.
f. Smother ball in glove with bare hand.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Demonstrate the correct fielding technique.**
- **Assist the athlete by standing behind and over him/her.**
- **Run drills to make athlete practice moving sideways with glove down.**
- **Have athletes practice fielding by playing pepper.**

3. Catch a hit fly ball.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Assume correct fielding position.
b. Watch ball as it makes contact with bat.
c. Move to spot where ball will land.
d. Point fingers of glove downward to make below-the-waist catch; fingers upward for above-the-waist catch.
e. Watch the ball into glove.
f. Smother the ball in glove with bare hand.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Demonstrate the correct catching technique.**
- **Emphasize moving the body to get under the ball.**
- **Run drills to make athlete practice moving in all directions with glove in above-the-waist position.**

4. Perform the "sure-stop" technique of fielding a ground ball.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Assume ready position.
b. Watch ball as it makes contact with bat.
c. Move body to get in line with path of ball.
d. Lower one knee to ground at point where ball is to be fielded.
e. Keep glove on the ground and eyes on the ball.
f. Keep body in front of the ball, not to one side.
g. Field ball in glove and smother it with bare hand.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Demonstrate correct kneeling position.**
- **Explain the purpose of using the body to block the ball.**
- **Teach the athlete to go down on one knee in a controlled manner.**

5. Learn fielding strategy.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Throw to base ahead of runner.
b. Tag base of forced runner to get runner out.
c. Tag runner when he is not forced to advance to get him out.
d. Know where to throw before each batter hits.
e. Follow the general rule, "get the sure out".
f. Do not allow the ball to get by one's body, i.e., "keep the ball in front of one's body".
g. Always throw the ball in order to move it around the field. The ball will travel faster from one place to another if it is thrown rather than carried by a player.
h. Do not throw the ball to a base which is not covered by a teammate.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Read rules of strategy to the athlete.**
- **Analyze each throwing and fielding tactic. Discuss the purpose for each tactic.**
- **Take athlete to a softball game, and ask athlete to identify various fielding tactics.**

6. Learn fielders' positions.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Study diagram of fielders' positions.
b. Draw a diagram of a softball field and write in the position number at the correct spot on the field.
c. Play every position at least once during practice.
d. Visualize each fielder's position and memorize the corresponding number for that position:
   1. Pitcher—pitches from the pitcher's mound.
   2. Catcher—assumes a crouch in line with the center of the plate and behind the back line of the batter's box.
   3. First Baseman—plays about ten feet to the second base side of first base and about five feet behind the first to second base line.
   4. Second Baseman—plays about fifteen feet to the first base side of second base and about ten feet behind the base line.
   5. Third Baseman—plays about eight feet to the second base side of third base and about five feet behind the second to third base line.
   6. Shortstop—plays about fifteen feet to the third base side of second base and about twelve feet behind the base line.
   7. Left fielder—plays between the third baseman and shortstop, halfway to the outfield fence.
   8. Left center fielder—plays between shortstop and second base, two-thirds of the way to outfield fence.
   9. Right center fielder—plays between second base and second baseman, two-thirds of the way to outfield fence.
   10. Right fielder—plays between second baseman and first baseman, halfway to the outfield fence.

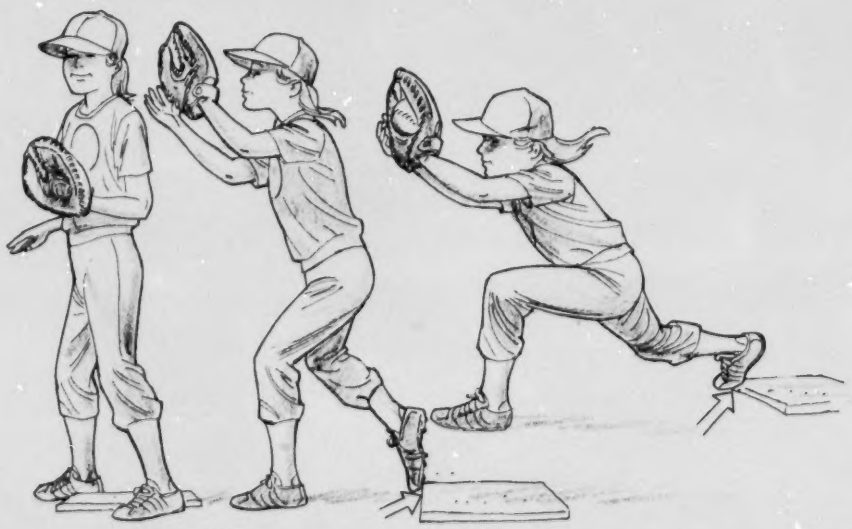
TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Use a poster or magnetic board and have the athlete place figures which represent each fielder on the board in their respective positions.**
- **Give a quiz about the various positions to the athletes.**
- **Play Work-Up, where each player plays at every position at least once.**

7. Learn positional strategy.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Understand the responsibilities of each position.
b. Learn the standard methods of making an out at each base.
c. Follow these tips for playing each position:
   1. Pitcher—covers the territory around the pitcher's mound; takes the throw at first base when the first baseman fields a ground ball deep behind the base; backs up third base and home on throws to these bases from the outfield.
   2. Catcher—covers the territory around home plate, including foul ground; directs infield on pop ups and foul fly balls; shifts all fielders according to the strength and stance of the batter.
   3. First Baseman—covers the territory around first base; including foul ground and shallow right field; takes throws from other infielders to get batters out at first base; receives throws by placing throwing-side foot on the base and stretching toward the throw with catching-side leg in order to catch the ball early; becomes cut-off man on throws from all out fields to home by moving to a spot near or on the pitcher's mound that is on line with the outfielder and home plate.
   4. Second Baseman—covers territory to the first base side of second base, including shallow right field; takes throws at second base when the ball has been hit to the left side of the infield; makes double plays by stepping on second base with right foot while receiving throw from other infielder and throwing to first base for the second out; becomes relay man on throws from deep right field.
   5. Third Baseman—covers territory around third base, including foul ground and shallow left field; takes throws at third base, for force outs or tag plays on non-forced runners; makes force out by stretching to receive the throw, and makes tag out by straddling the base.



6. Shortstop—covers territory to the third base side of second base, including shallow left field; takes throws at second base when the ball has been hit to the right side of the infield; makes double plays by stepping on second base with left foot while receiving throw, taking one step with right foot and throwing to first on next step with left foot; becomes relay man on throws to third from deep center or left field, and on throws to home from deep left field.

7–10. Outfielders—cover their respective fields; back up plays at the various bases in their areas; back up fellow outfielders on all plays; throw to base ahead of lead runner to prevent the runner from advancing; throw to relay man or cut off man on throws to third and home; shift to left or right and in or out depending on the wind, batter's strength and stance, score, and the location of base runners.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Diagram relay throws on paper or a blackboard. Discuss the reason for using relay throws: i.e., to get the ball back into the infield as quickly as possible.**
- **Instruct the catcher to tell the cut off man to intercept the throw if there is no chance for a play at home, or to let the throw go through if there is a chance for a play at home. If the cut off man intercepts the throw, he must decide whether to try to throw out the base runner, or to hold the ball for no play.**
- **It is standard theory that the second baseman, third baseman and shortstop be right-handed throwers, because it takes them one less step to make a throw to first or second base.**

BATTING—LEVEL II

C. BATTING

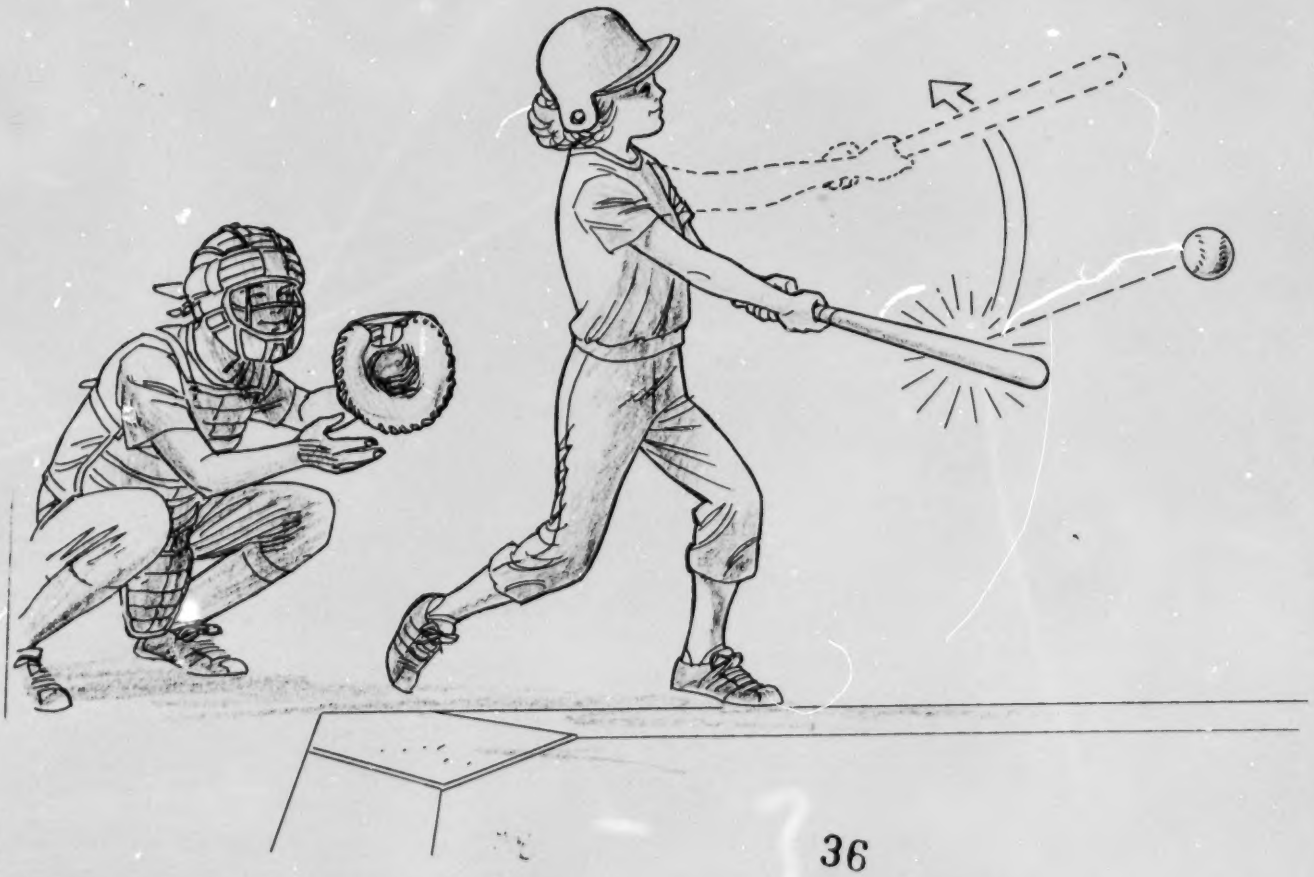
1. Hit a pitched ball.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Assume correct batting stance.
b. Focus eyes on pitcher.
c. Watch the ball, even before it leaves the pitcher's hand, all the way to the plate.
d. As ball approaches the plate, decide to hit it or let it pass.
e. To hit the ball, perform batting swing.
f. Watch the ball hit the bat.
g. Swing through the ball. Allow arms to swing the bat around past the front of body to batter's other side. This is called the "follow-through."

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Begin practice of making contact by using a light bat and a large ball. Gradually reduce size of equipment as athlete progresses.**
- **Emphasize the importance of making contact.**
- **Conduct batting practice.**
- **Instruct the athlete to swing through the ball.**
- **A good method for teaching an athlete to swing through the ball is to have the athlete swing at a pitched ball with a stringless tennis racquet. The point is to make the ball pass cleanly through the racquet.**



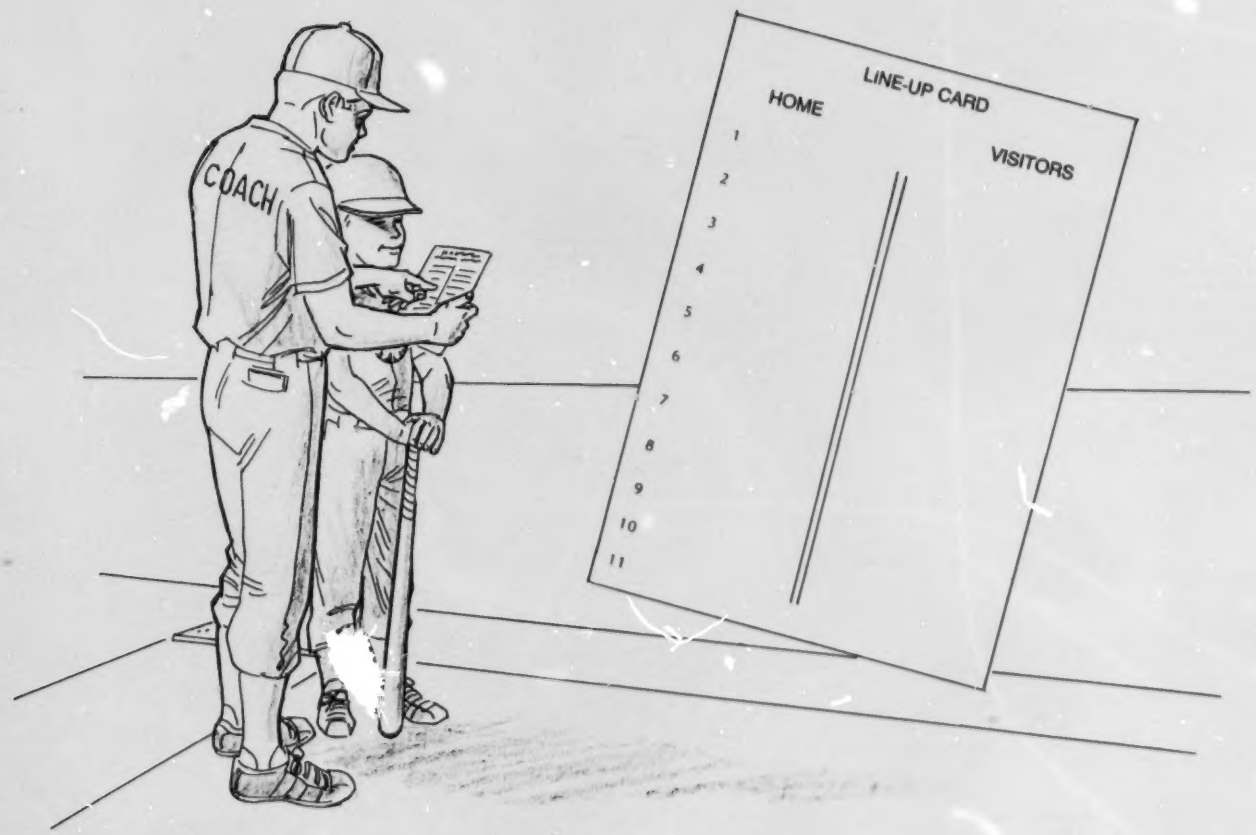
2. Learn the batting order.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Read line-up card.
b. Recognize position in batting order.
c. Recognize teammates' positions in batting order.
d. Recognize who is the Designated Hitter in the line-up.
e. Learn rules for batter substitution.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Demonstrate filling out the line-up card.**
- **Discuss the purpose for putting a player in a particular spot in the batting order.**
- **Have athlete fill out a line-up card.**



D. BASE RUNNING

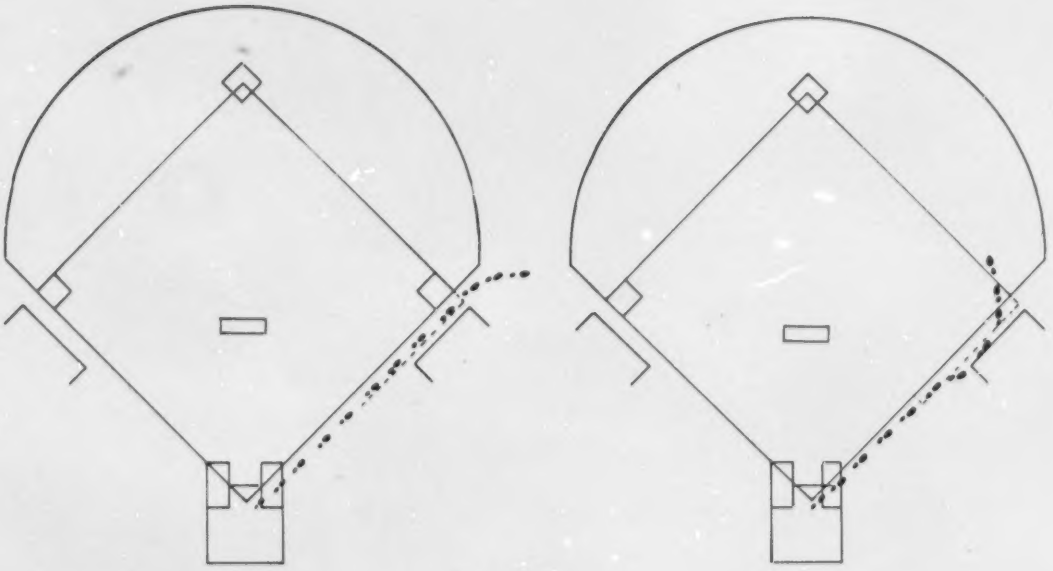
1. Correctly run to first base after hitting the ball.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Assume correct batting stance.
b. Swing bat and hit ball into fair territory.
c. Drop bat (do not throw it).
d. Run to first base (as fast as possible).
e. Run past first base after tagging it.
f. Either bear off into foul territory to stay safe at first, or round first toward second if there is a chance for extra bases; or continue to run to succeeding bases depending on type of hit.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Demonstrate hitting the ball, dropping the bat, and running to first base.**
- **Emphasize safety importance of dropping the bat. In a game-like situation, penalize players for throwing a bat.**



2. Tag up on a fly ball.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Maintain position on base.
b. Watch teammate bat.
c. If teammate hits fly ball with less than two outs, stay on base.
d. Watch fly ball.
e. Have foot on base when ball is caught.
f. Run to next base (when possible) before the fielder's throw gets there.
g. Listen to the first or third base coach for directions.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Demonstrate tagging up technique.**
- **Explain the reasons for tagging up.**

3. Demonstrate knowledge of base running rules and strategy.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Understand one player is on a base at one time. (First player to it is entitled to stay, other player must move to another base or be put out)
b. Run within base paths.
c. Do not pass teammates on base paths.
d. Avoid being struck by ball hit by teammate.
e. Advance to next base without interfering with the fielders.
f. Everyone runs when there are two outs.
g. Understand there is no leading nor stealing.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Practice variety of game situations on base paths.**
- **Explain reasons for base running rules.**
- **Emphasize the importance of thinking while on the bases and the need to listen to the base coaches.**

RULES

4.0 Given standard or modified rules and regulations, the athlete will adhere to those rules and regulations while participating in Slo-pitch Softball.

1. Adapt ability to assume all positions for team play when given instruction.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Identify own team and opponent's team.
b. Know that ten players are on the field at one time.
c. Distinguish between the different positions.
d. Understand one's playing area.
e. Identify batter's box.

2. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the basic rules of Slo-pitch Softball at all times.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Understand what constitutes a dead ball:
   - an illegally batted ball
   - an illegal pitch (too high/low an arc)
   - stepping out of the batter's box
   - a wild pitch
   - an uncaught foul ball
   - a blocked ball

b. Understand scoring rules:
   - base hit
   - sacrifice
   - out

c. Understand what constitutes an assist and an error.
d. Identify strike zone.
e. Take Softball Rules Quiz to test knowledge of rules.
f. Understand that a Designated Hitter may be used in Slo-pitch Softball. It is not required that a team use a D.H., but failure to declare such a hitter prior to the game precludes the use of the D.H. in that game. The D.H. may bat in any spot in the batting order, but the batting order must remain constant. However, any 10 of the 11 players can take a defensive position throughout the game.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Discuss importance of playing and being responsible for each particular position's area.**
- **Conduct infield and outfield practice.**
- **Use a felt board and assist athlete in labeling positions.**
- **Workup: Use 14 players—10 players in the field and other 4 players bat. Rotate positions among players.**
- **Discuss and demostrate what constitutes an out, base hit, and sacrifice.**
- **Use string or wood frame or other tools to identify and locate strike zone.**

3. Demonstrate ability to recognize (and accept consequences of) game violations at all times.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Identify violations:
   - delay of game
   - unsportsmanlike tactics
   - illegal entry
   - excessive time-outs

b. Recognize and understand calls made by the umpire.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Discuss consequences of game violations.**
- **Point out unsportsmanlike tactics.**

4. Demonstrate ability to actively participate in the game at all times.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Understand offensive team play (batting and base running).

b. Understand defensive play (fielding, throwing and catching.)

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Request all athletes to help each other and the coach during practice.**
- **Allow every athlete to partake in all phases of the game.**

5.0 While participating in Slo-pitch Softball, the athlete will exhibit sportsmanship with teammates and opponents at all times.

1. Exhibit competitive effort at all times.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Put forth maximum effort during game.
b. Exhibit good base running and consistent hitting.
c. Make attempts to catch all balls in area of responsibility.

2. Exhibit teamwork at all times.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Play position properly.
b. Play ball as soon as it can be reached.
c. Make accurate throws and perform consistent fielding.
d. Back up teammates on hit balls and throws.

3. Exhibit fair play at all times.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Do not disregard the rules of the game.
b. Respect the decision of the umpire.
c. Demonstrate sportsmanship.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

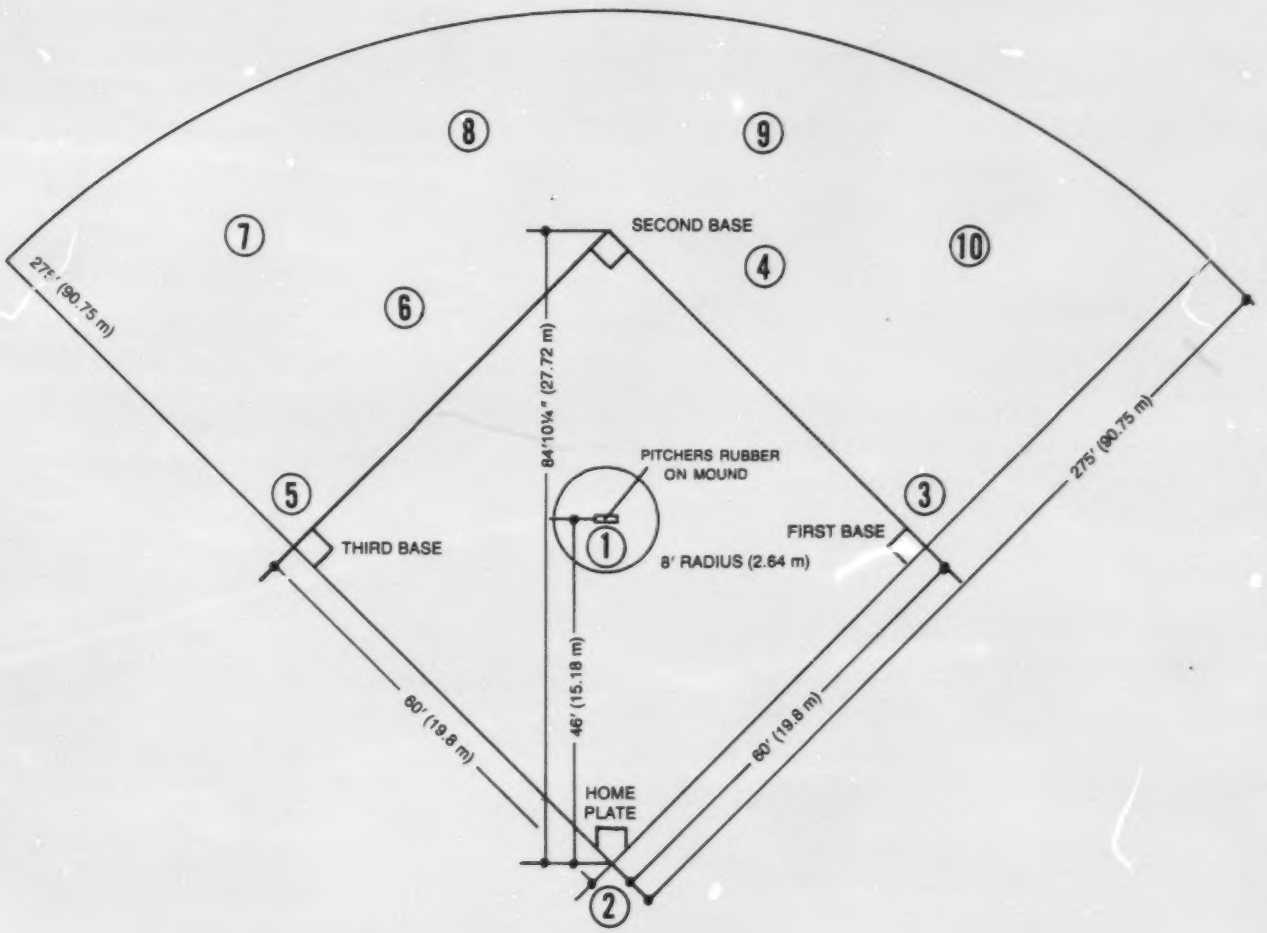
- **Those athletes who do not put forth any effort nor pay attention while playing softball will sit out an inning in the dugout.**
- **Treat all athletes as equals.**
- **Run drills involving the whole team together.**
- **Discuss softball etiquette, such as: retrieving fair share of out-of-bounds balls; congratulating opponents after all games, win or lose; controlling temper and behavior at all times; waiting for opposing player to return to his position before continuing play; allowing both teams sufficient warm-up time; and, clearing the area of obstructions (bats).**
- **Give sportsmanship awards or tokens after each game or class.**
- **Always commend athletes when they demonstrate sportsmanship.**

FIELD DIMENSIONS

OFFICIAL SLO-PITCH SOFTBALL FIELD DIMENSIONS

These are Official Amateur Softball Association dimensions for a regulation men's slo-pitch softball field

The circled numbers represent the ten fielders and are placed according to their normal playing position.



RULES QUIZ

SUGGESTED SLO-PITCH SOFTBALL RULES QUIZ

1. When a batter receives four balls he is given a:
   a) strikeout
   b) walk
   c) base hit

2. Three strikes on a batter is a:
   a) base hit
   b) walk
   c) strikeout

3. A person playing first base would be considered:
   a) a substitute
   b) an infielder
   c) an outfielder

4. A person playing centerfield would be considered:
   a) an outfielder
   b) an infielder
   c) a substitute

5. A softball team requires how many players on the field?:
   a) 12
   b) 8
   c) 10

6. When a team is batting how many outs does it get per inning?:
   a) 2
   b) 3
   c) 4

7. When batting a batter must stand in the:
   a) on-deck circle
   b) dugout
   c) batter's box

8. To get a strike the pitcher must:
   a) throw the ball to first base
   b) tag the runner
   c) pitch the ball over home plate

9. Base runners must tag up before advancing a base when:
   a) a fielder catches a fly ball
   b) a pitcher throws a wild pitch
   c) a batter hits a home run

10. When players are not in the field, they:
    a) sit in the stands
    b) stand in the coach's box
    c) sit in the dugout

Answers: 1.b; 2.c; 3.b; 4.a; 5.c; 6.b; 7.c; 8.c; 9.a; 10.c.

SCORING

METHOD FOR SCORING A SOFTBALL GAME

Scoring a softball game can be a simple or a complex process, depending on the amount of information a coach wishes to record. No two people score a game in exactly the same manner. Each coach uses a different set of figures, diagrams and numbers which precisely record what occurred on each and every play in the game.

It is recommended that the coach fill out a score card for every game. Keeping records of the games will assist the coach in his evaluation of an athlete's progress, and will allow the athlete to keep track of his/her season's statistics. The coach can improve the athlete's understanding of the game by asking him/her to assist the coach in scoring the game. A regulation softball scorebook with score sheets like those below are useful and available at most athletic equipment stores.

Here is a suggested method for scoring a slo-pitch softball game. Most printed sheets include the important abbreviations for offensive play. It is the coach's decision how to record the defensive play on each batter. Notice that this book includes a space for stolen base (S.B.) Remember that stealing, as well as leading off the base and bunting, is not allowed in slo-pitch softball. So, follow the directions below and play ball!

Here's how you score a game . . .

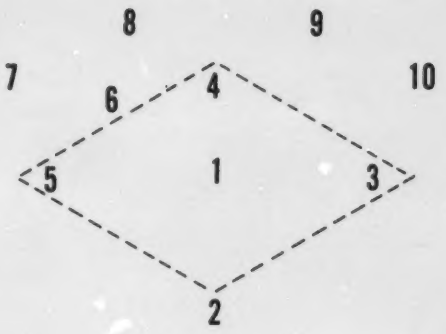
Many experienced softball scorers will have already developed their own special expertise for recording in this book all the action in a game. The instructions which follow are offered to others who are seeking further suggestions for improving their techniques in recording the actions of each player, of each inning, and of each team.

First, a number is commonly assigned to each defensive position . . .

1 pitcher	6 shortstop
2 catcher	7 left fielder
3 first baseman	8 left center fielder
4 second baseman	9 right center fielder
5 third baseman	10 right fielder
	11 Designated Hitter

Here's how you record a player reaching a base.

In the rectangle to the right of a player, under the appropriate inning, draw a pencil line from home



base around the diamond to the base reached. Next, you'll note, on the *right* side of each box, a series of appreviations. These refer to a number of possible ways in which the player may reach a base . . .

1B one base hit	SAC sacrifice
2B two base hit	HP hit by pitcher
3B three base hit	BB base on balls
HR home run	SB stolen base

Draw a dash before the appropriate abbreviation. For example, a batter making a two base hit would be scored . . .

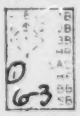
A hit batter would be shown as reaching first base . . .

When a runner reaches home base, color in the entire diamond solidly . . .

Here's how you record an out.

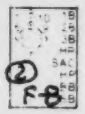
In the lower part of the appropriate rectangle to the right of the player, record the number of the defensive fielder who catches a ground ball and then the number of the player making the put-out.

For example, should the batter hit an infield ground ball to shortstop relayed to first base in time for the out, this would be scored 6-3 . . .

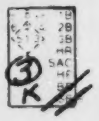


SCORING

A fly ball to center field would be scored F8 . . .



Each out is numbered and circled (note 1 and 2 above). Thus 3 indicates the third and last out of an inning. Also at the end of an inning, mark a double line diagonally at the bottom right corner of the appropriate box . . .



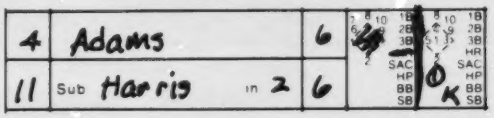
Here's how you record certain other plays.

Within the player's rectangle, write in near the bottom other abbreviations, as follows . . .

- Strikeout (called or swinging) . . . . . K
- Pass ball . . . . . PB
- Wild pitch . . . . . WP
- Balk . . . . . BK
- Error (either thrown or dropped by a fielder . . . . . E
  - . . . in addition, show the fielder making the error, thus E5
- Fielder's choice . . . . . FC
- Double play . . . . . DP
  - . . . in addition, show a small bracket connecting the fielders involved, thus 6-4-3
- Run batted in . . . . . RBI
  - . . . in addition, show near home base on the diamond the name of the player hitting the ball scoring the run.
- Sacrifice fly . . . . . SF

In addition to recording each play within the player's rectangle, it is advisable at the same time to place a series of dots in the appropriate column at the right side of each page. This is a double check on the completeness of your recording, and also speeds up the final scorekeeping at the end of each game.

If all ten players are at bat before an inning ends, then mark out the printed number at the top of the column for the next inning, and continue the same inning down a second column. You'll find there are enough extra columns. When a player leaves the game, draw a vertical line on the right side of the box showing his action in the last inning played. Actions of his substitute continue thereafter horizontally across the page.



At the end of each inning, add vertically the total runs, hits, errors, and the number of players left on base (LOB) for the entire inning, for example . . .

Team Totals	R / H	6 / 10
	E / LOB	1 / 3

At the end of each game, add horizontally each player's batting and fielding results. Transfer this data to each player's page in the back of the book. Finally, add vertically the totals for all the players under each batting and fielding column on the right half of each page. Incidentally, on each player's page of statistics for each game, there are columns for averages for batting and for fielding . . . both a game average and a cumulative season average. The pages of arithmetical averages preceding these player's pages will aid you in computing each average.

Now let's score a typical inning . . .

Adams hit a home run . . . . . .

Jones grounded out (second to first) . . . . .

Shapiro called out on strikes . . . . . .

Smith safe on error by second baseman . .

Cornell flied out to center field . . . . . .

4	Adams		6	HR
	Sub	in		
3	Jones		3	4-3
	Sub	in		
2	Shapiro		8	K
	Sub	in		
6	Smith		7	E-4
	Sub	in		
12	Cornell		4	F-8
	Sub	in		

Team Totals	R / H	1 / 1
	E / LOB	1 / 1

..... vs. ..... At ..... Date .....

Time of game: ..... hr. ..... min. Umpires .....

Team ..... Scorer .....

Player's Totals

Batting ..... Fielding

No.	Name	Pos.	Inning 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	AB	R	H	1B	2B	3B	HR	BB	RBI	SB	SO	SAC	HP	PO	A	E
	Sub	in																												

LEAD UP ACTIVITIES

In Softball, as in other sports, the coaches, teachers or instructors can run supplemental activities which will promote the athlete's ability to perform softball skills. The activities might include drills, games and classroom instruction, and they should be tailored to suit the ability level of the individual athletes. Those listed below represent only a few of the many activities which are available to coaches for use as supplemental material.

DRILLS

1. Catch and return to leader.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Stand in a circle with teammates.
b. Catch ball thrown by leader who stands in middle of circle.
c. Throw ball back to leader.
d. Take a turn being the leader.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Demonstrate drills to athlete.**
- **Change the throwing skill to rolling the ball, or throwing a high ball.**
- **Change the formation of the players.**
- **Vary the order of throwing in the formation.**

2. Throw around the formation.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Stand in desired formation, such as circle or square.
b. Receive ball from adjacent player.
c. Throw to next player in order.

3. Throw and change lines.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Stand at the head of one line, which faces another line of teammates.
b. Throw ball to head of other line.
c. Run to end of other line.
d. Wait until at head of other line.
e. Catch ball.
f. Throw and move to end of original line.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Vary the type of throw.**
- **Vary the distance between the lines.**
- **Demonstrate the skill to the athletes, and emphasize the importance of keeping the lines moving.**

4. Throw to a moving target.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Stand parallel to a line of teammates.
b. Signal player at head of line to run in certain direction, as if running to a base.
c. Throw ball to spot ahead of teammate so ball and player arrive at "base" at the same time.
d. Take turn as target.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Demonstrate throwing ahead of the moving target.**
- **Have athletes pair off and play toss and catch while jogging side by side.**
- **Practice throwing skill by aiming at a swinging target, such as a tire or a hula hoop.**

GAMES

1. **Keep Away**
   With three players, two players attempt to play catch around or over the third player in the middle. If third player intercepts a throw, he/she replaces the thrower on the end. Allow for movement, but define the boundaries or restrict the throwers' steps. Vary the game by allowing ground ball throws only. Play two against two, or team against team.

2. **Roller Bat**
   Use one ball, bat, and base for eight to ten players. Game involves pitcher, catcher, batter and fielders. After ball is batted, player fielding the ball rolls it in an attempt to hit the bat which has been placed lengthwise on the ground near the plate by the batter. If fielder is successful in hitting the bat before the batter reaches the base, he/she becomes the batter. If fielder is not successful, batter hits again. Winner is batter with most number of safe hits. Rotate fielding positions as necessary. Modify the game by using a batting tee. There are no fouls.

3. **Throw and Run Softball**
   This game is played like regular softball with the following exception. The batter catches the pitch and throws the ball out into the field. The ball is then treated as a batted ball by the fielders, and regular slowpitch softball rules go into effect. A ball thrown into foul territory (i.e., a foul ball) constitutes an automatic out. Vary rules by requiring batter to throw the ball underhand, or under his/her leg.

4. **Beat Ball Softball**
   After batter throws ball out into field, fielders must throw the ball to the catcher at home plate. Catcher orders batter to "stop" running when he/she has received the ball. Batter earns one point for each base he tags before catcher orders him/her to "stop". There are no outs, and every player gets a chance to bat. A fly ball caught or a foul ball would result in no score, and would count as a turn at bat.

5. **Tee Ball**
   Regular slowpitch softball rules apply in this game, with the following exceptions. The ball is hit off of a batting tee which has been set next to home plate. In the first inning everyone bats once, regardless of the number of outs. The regular three out rule applies from the start of the second inning to the end of the game.

MODIFICATIONS AND ADAPTATIONS

The focus of the Softball Guide is to assist all athletes to function at their maximum performance level. Achieving this goal can be facilitated through the Individualized Education Program (IEP). Realistic goals and objectives should be developed which present a challenge but do not force the athlete into experiences loaded with failure. To provide positive experiences means that many handicapped athletes will require instructional activities that are adapted to their particular needs. Some examples of activity adaptations include:

MODIFYING THE RULES OF AN ACTIVITY

This can be accomplished in several ways. Special Olympians are often denied the experience of an event because of the frequent stops due to rules infractions. Therefore, teachers should not be reluctant to modify the rules (e.g. shortening the field) as long as the major objective of the event (i.e. playing the game) is not disturbed.

ACCOMMODATING THE ATHLETE'S SPECIAL NEEDS

An oversized, beeper ball may be used for athletes with visual handicaps. A coach's voice can also be used to assist the visually impaired athlete.

ENCOURAGING ACTIVITY

Teachers can structure lessons so that athletes are asked to respond to challenging questions, such as: "Show me how to throw the ball from first base to third base?" or "Show me how to run to first base" Such an approach permits the athletes with various levels of ability to respond in ways that allow for success. Obviously, variations in responses to the questions would be apparent from athlete to athlete depending on the level of ability and severity of impairment.

CHANGING THE METHOD OF COMMUNICATION

Athletes sometimes require communications systems that are suited to their needs. For example, verbally explaining a task may not match up well with some athletes' information processing systems. Information which is more specific might be provided in other ways. The instructor or peer teacher, for example, could simply demonstrate the sports skill. Some athletes may need not only to hear it explained or see it performed but also must read a description of the skill. This need can be met for poor or non-readers through the use of a poster board to which stick figures are attached to show the sequence necessary to perform a skill like the softball pitch.

MODIFICATION OF EQUIPMENT

Successful participation in sports for some handicapped athletes requires equipment which has been modified to suit their particular needs. Requests for purchase or construction of special equipment can now be facilitated through the Individualized Education Program. If special equipment is needed to help an athlete progress in physical education, then it should be identified at the IEP meeting and included on the IEP form. Fortunately, special equipment is usually not expensive and is possible to make.

Orthopedic Impairments

Use modified field with bases about eight meters apart.
Use pushers for wheelchairs.
Use larger, slower moving ball.
Allow more players on field.

Visual Impairments

Increase size of ball.
Use brightly colored ball.
Use an over-sized beeper ball.
Use guidelines to line bases.
Use sighted guide to help athlete run.

Auditory Impairments

Teach officials and umpires to use sign language.

Modified Game

Impose a 10 run per inning rule (when one team scores 10 runs, their side is retired whether or not there are any outs).
Shorten the base paths.
Reduce the field size.
Increase the number of players.
Tee Ball—hit ball from tee.
Use a super soft softball.
Have a coach be the pitcher.

INFUSION CHART

ARTS	Chooses and designs team insignia and mascot. Makes team signs and posters.
SCIENCE	Understands why the ball goes further when hit harder and how to direct the ball in the desired trajectory. Judges distance of hit ball.
INDUSTRIAL ARTS	Constructs a simple scoreboard. Constructs backstops.
MATHEMATICS	Estimates the cost of purchasing equipment and clothing. Keeps score. Counts the number of hits per side. Measures the distance in field layouts.
HOME ECONOMICS	Dresses appropriately for playing softball. Mends and hems uniforms. Washes and dries uniforms.
HEALTH	Practices safety skills when playing. Knows the basic first aid for minor injuries (scrapes, scratches, sunburn). Uses sun screens, tanning lotion when playing in direct sunlight. Chooses the appropriate clothing for various weather.
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	Performs warm-up exercises. Understands and demonstrates the rules and skills of softball. Recognizes the importance of teamwork and team spirit. Recognizes the leisure value of softball. Practices refining softball skills. Practices basic ball handling skills.
READING/LANGUAGE	Reads the scoreboard. Listens to instructions and follows directions. Expresses himself/herself during play (cheers, encourages). Reads and listens to instructions for playing softball.
SOCIAL STUDIES	Identifies and locates neighborhood facilities where softball could be played. Participates in the establishment of teams and rules for playing softball.

TERMINOLOGY AND RESOURCES

Ball
When the pitched ball fails to cross the plate in the strike zone.

Base
One of four points, all of which must be touched in the proper order for a player to score a run.

Batter's Box
The area on either side of home plate in which the batter must stand while batting.

Designated Hitter
The eleventh player.

Diamond
The playing area made up of the three bases and home plate.

Double
A two base hit. A ball hit which allows the batter to make it to second base without stopping.

Fair Ball
A ball which is hit between the foul lines.

Foul Ball
A ball which is hit outside the foul lines.

Home Plate
The base over which the strike zone is located, and the last base which must be touched in order to score a run.

Home Run
A four base hit. A ball hit which allows the batter to touch all the bases and score a run without stopping.

Infielders
The defensive players who are positioned on or near the bases.

Line-up
The order in which the offensive team bats.

Out
When a batter's hit is caught, when the batter receives three strikes, or when a base runner is tagged or put out at a base.

Outfielders
The defensive players who are positioned behind the infielders.

Single
A one base hit. A ball hit which allows the batter to take first base only.

Strike
When a batter swings at and misses a pitched ball, allows a pitch to pass the plate in the strike zone without attempting to hit it, hits a foul ball or hits a foul tip.

Strike Zone
The pitcher's target area which is laterally bounded by the edges of the plate, and vertically bounded by the knees and chest of the batter.

Triple
A three base hit. A ball hit which allows the batter to make it to third base without stopping.

RESOURCES

Printed Materials

Amateur Softball Association of America: *Coaching Youth Softball*; The Athletic Institute, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, 1978.

Field Service Unit in Physical Education and Recreation for the Handicapped, Michigan State University (J.A. Wessel, Director): *I Can Sports, Leisure, Recreational Instructional Skills Program*; Hubbard Co., Northbrook, Illinois.

Irmer, Larry D. et al.: *Physical Education Opportunity Program for Exceptional Learners (PEOPEL)*; Phoenix High School, Phoenix, Arizona, 1977.

Joyce, Joan and Anquillare, John: *Winning Softball*; Henry Regnery Co., chicago, Illinois 1975.

Special Olympics, Inc.: *Coaches' Handbook*; Washington, D.C. 1980.

Other

Amateur Softball Association of America, 2801 N.E. 50th St., Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, 73111.

American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, 1900 Association Drive, Reston, VA., 22091.

National Association of Sports for Cerebral Palsy, P.O. Box 3874 Amity Station, New Haven, CT. 06525.

National Wheelchair Softball Association, P.O. Box 737, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, 57101.

Special Olympics, Inc., 1701 K [illegible] Washington, D.C., 20006-1381.

United States Slo-Pitch Softball Association, P.O. Box 2047, Petersburg, VA., 23804.

SKILL SHEETS

Instructions

The Skill Sheets have been designed to record each athlete's sports skills skills performance throughout the program. The vertical top boxes identify the specific tasks to be accomplished. Each box to the right of the Special Olympian's name includes a blank for the instructor to fill in the standard of success for each athlete based on his/her ability and the task to be performed. The standard, whether in distance, time or repetitions, reflects how well the athlete must execute the desired skill. You as the instructor are the one to determine each athlete's level of acceptable performance. Encourage your athletes to fill out the chart after each training session.

See example on page 53.

KNOWLEDGE OF SOFTBALL

NAME	Attempts to know the game of Softball	Uses correct softball terminology	Recognizes each position on the softball team	Recognizes offense + defense during a softball game	Understands importance of safety and sportsmanship while playing softball	Adapts to changes in game situations		
MIKE	80 % of time	80 % of time	70 % of time	80 % of time	80 % of time	100 % of time		
LINDA	90 % of time	90 % of time	70 % of time	70 % of time	90 % of time	100 % of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		

SAMPLE

THROWING

NAME	Attempts to throw a softball	Throws a softball in any direction	Throws a softball in desired direction	Throws the softball 10-15 meters to a teammate	Throws the softball to a designated base	Throws the softball underhand correctly	Throws the softball overhand correctly		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		

CATCHING

NAME	Attempts to catch a softball in the air	Attempts to field a softball on the ground	Assumes the ready to field position	Fields a ground ball correctly	Makes a "below-the-waist" catch correctly	Makes an "above-the-waist" catch correctly	Catches a thrown fly ball	Catches a hit fly ball	Fields a hit ground ball	
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	

BATTERING

NAME	Attempts to hit a softball	Assumes proper batting stance	Grips bat properly	Makes a controlled and level swing	Hits ball off batting tee in any direction	Hits ball off batting tee in desired direction	Hits ball off batting tee into fair territory in a softball game	Hits a pitched ball in any direction	Hits a pitched ball into fair territory in a softball game	
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	

BASE RUNNING

NAME	Attempts to run to first base	Walks to first base	Correctly identifies bases	Correctly identifies order of base running	Runs to first base	Runs into foul territory after tagging first	Runs within the base path	When on base, exhibits knowledge of base running rules	Listens to base coaches	
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	
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	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	

PITCHING

NAME	Attempts to pitch a softball.	Throws a softball in correct pitching motion.	Pitches a softball correctly in a softball game.	Exhibits understanding and knowledge of pitching rules while pitching.				
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time				
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time				
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time				
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time				
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time				
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time				

RULES OF SOFTBALL

NAME	Attempts to learn the rules of Slo-pitch Softball.	Attempts to play Slo-pitch Softball by the rules.	Recognizes playing area and boundaries.	Helps teammates with the rules.	Understands enough of the rules of Slo-pitch Softball to allow for successful participation.	Adheres to the rules of Slo-pitch Softball at all times.			
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time			
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time			
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time			
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time			
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time			
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time			

KNOWLEDGE OF SOFTBALL

NAME	Attempts to know the game of Softball.	Uses correct softball terminology.	Recognizes each position on a softball team.	Recognizes umpire's signs during a softball game.	Understands importance of safety and sportsmanship while playing softball.	Adapts to changes in game situations.		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		

SOFTBALL PARTICIPATION

NAME	Attempts to participate in softball.	Participates infrequently.	Practices softball skills.	Recognizes teammates and opponents.	Participates cooperatively and competitively in softball	Participates regularly in softball.	Practices and plays softball with enthusiasm.	Exhibits fair play in softball participation.		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		

DATE _____

Sports Skills Assessment Record Sheet

	PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE		LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT						LEVEL OF INDEPENDENCE				
	HAS PARTICIPATED	NEVER PARTICIPATED	BEGINNER	ROOKIE	WINNER	CHAMP	SUPER CHAMP	SUPERSTAR	NEED PHYSICAL ASSISTANCE	NEEDS DEMONSTRATION	RECEIVES VERBAL ASSISTANCE	RECEIVES NO HELP	
NAME			1-13	14-26	27-39	40-52	53-65	66-77					
	1	2	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	1	2	3	4	
	1	2	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	1	2	3	4	
	1	2	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	1	2	3	4	
	1	2	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	1	2	3	4	
	1	2	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	1	2	3	4	
	1	2	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	1	2	3	4	
	1	2	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	1	2	3	4	
	1	2	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	1	2	3	4	
	1	2	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	1	2	3	4	
	1	2	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	1	2	3	4	
	1	2	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	1	2	3	4	
	1	2	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	1	2	3	4	
	1	2	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	1	2	3	4	
	1	2	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	1	2	3	4	
	1	2	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	1	2	3	4	
	1	2	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	1	2	3	4	
	1	2	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	1	2	3	4	
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	1	2	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	1	2	3	4	
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	1	2	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	1	2	3	4	
	1	2	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	1	2	3	4	
	1	2	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	1	2	3	4	
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	1	2	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	1	2	3	4	
	1	2	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	1	2	3	4	
	1	2	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	1	2	3	4	

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